VOL. 46 | ISSUE 04 | DECEMBER 10-23, 2025

DETROIT METRO TIMES

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The rise, fall, and uncertain future of the historic Leland House and its legendary City Club

By Steve Neavling

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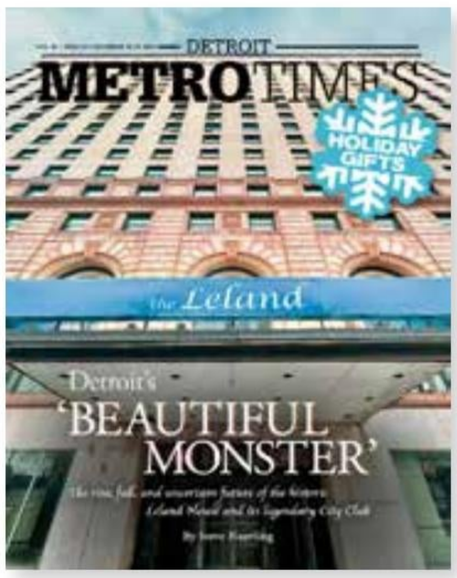

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sunday karaoke WITH MATT THE MILLIONAIRE	01 CLOSED	**tuesday karaoke** WITH MATT THE MILLIONAIRE	03	04	05 **BIRDS FROM DINOSAURS** SPEED CIRCUIT + DJ DANTON	06 RACCOON DOGS C.I.A. + DJ RYAN GIMPERT
07	08 CLOSED	09	10 **CLASSIC LOUNGE SOUNDS** WITH KESHTKAR & CO.	11	12 **LADYSHIP WARSHIP** VOXANNA + DJ SANFORD	13 **HEARTBREAK BEATS** DJS ZUMBY & JOSH
14	15 CLOSED	16	17	18	19 NOBODY'S BUSINESS + DJ SOVAIN SYLVAIN	20 **THE REEFERMEN** + DJ AVA EAST
21	22 **DEADBEAT BEAT** RAT PAWS	23	24 CLOSED	25	26 **TINO G.'S DUMPSTER MACHINE** + DJ NICK NIGHTPORT	27 WINDS OF NEPTUNE Angel of Mars + DJ AMY K
28 **karaoke** INDUSTRY NIGHT	29 PRETTY ISLAND, The Going Gones	30	31 **THE HOURLIES** ROB ZINCK & THE COLLABORATORS PLUTOPHONICS DJ TONY DRAKE	01 **JERRY'S TONE** GRATEFUL DEAD TRIBUTE	02 **DEAR DARKNESS** CRUNE + DJ BEAU GARDENS	03 **THE IMAGINATRON** OMO + DJ DYKECHOW

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Feedback

We have some great news: Clay Jones is back in the saddle. The nationally syndicated political cartoonist is still recovering from a stroke he had in October, but that hasn't stopped him from contributing cartoons. We were delighted to see his submissions appear in our email inbox again. Below is a note Jones shared. We wish him a continued recovery, and we hope you will too.
—Lee DeVito, Editor-in-Chief

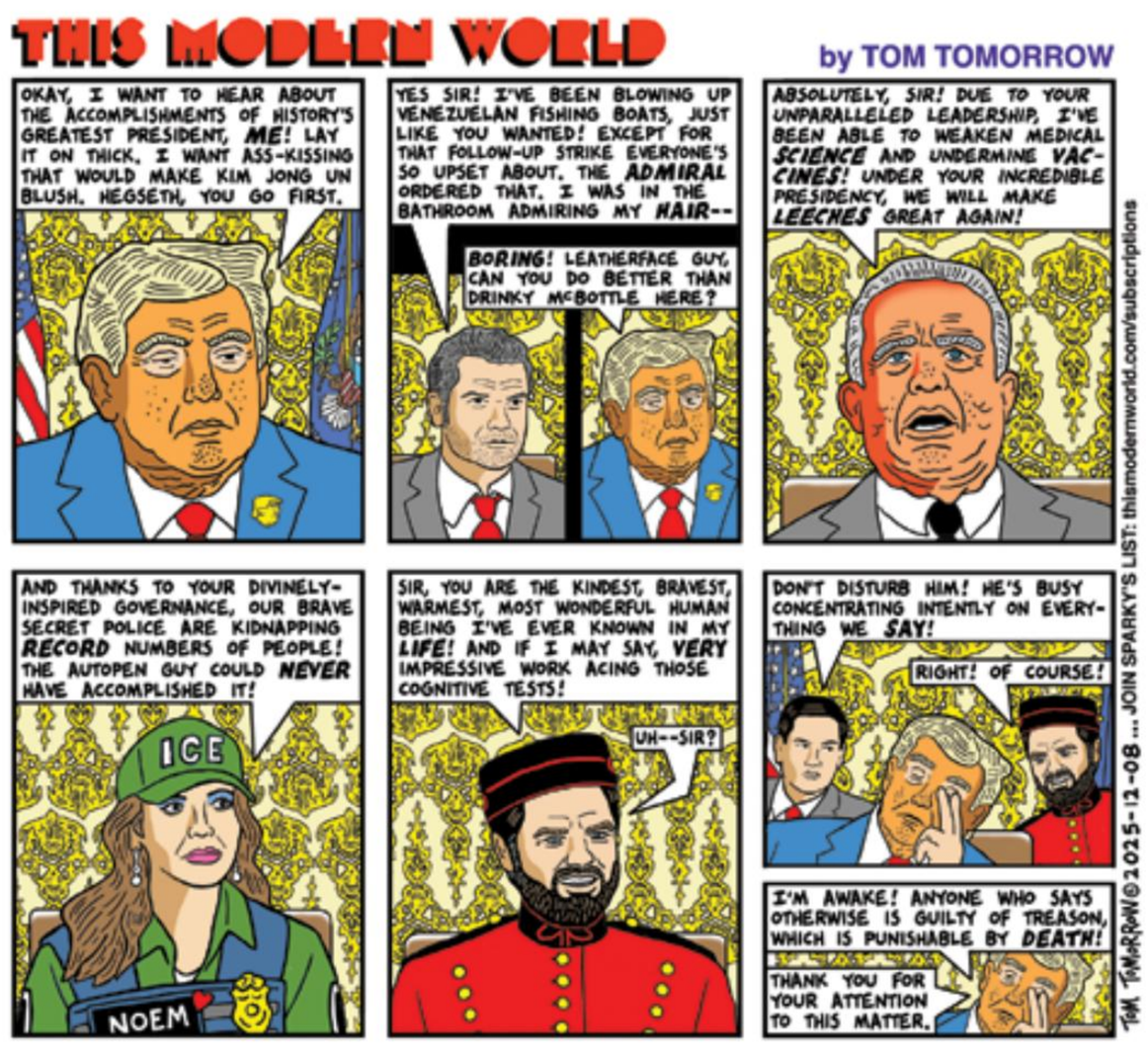
Hi there,

For those who missed the last message about me being back, I am back. I received a couple of queries. I am back, but not at a full-time schedule, or maybe it is a full-time schedule. My plan for now is to draw five a week, but I'm not set on which days at this time. A lot of this involves how I'm feeling that day and at the moment. I am still very numb on the right side of my body, and my strength has not come back yet. Naturally, because fate has a sense of humor, I am right-handed. Some of my work is being done with my left hand, which has little control but has strength. But I am back.
Thank you all for your patience and for not giving up on me,

—Clay

Have an opinion? Of course you do! Sound off: letters@metrotimes.com. MT

CLAYTOONZ.COM
YOU CAN HAVE A BARBIE DREAM HOUSE...BUT IT WILL BE GOLD AND RENAMED THE DONALD J. TRUMP DREAM HOUSE...
SUSIE!!! GET OFF JEFFREY EPSTEIN'S FRIEND'S LAP!...


THIS MODERN WORLD
by TOM TOMORROW
OKAY, I WANT TO HEAR ABOUT THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF HISTORY'S GREATEST PRESIDENT, ME! LAY IT ON THICK. I WANT ASS-KISSING THAT WOULD MAKE KIM JONG UN BLUSH. HEGSETH, YOU GO FIRST.
YES SIR! I'VE BEEN BLOWING UP VENEZUELAN FISHING BOATS, JUST LIKE YOU WANTED! EXCEPT FOR THAT FOLLOW-UP STRIKE EVERYONE'S SO UPSET ABOUT. THE ADMIRAL ORDERED THAT. I WAS IN THE BATHROOM ADMIRING MY HAIR--
BORING! LEATHERFACE GUY, CAN YOU DO BETTER THAN DRINKY MCBOTTLE HERE?
ABSOLUTELY, SIR! DUE TO YOUR UNPARALLELED LEADERSHIP, I'VE BEEN ABLE TO WEAKEN MEDICAL SCIENCE AND UNDERMINE VACCINES! UNDER YOUR INCREDIBLE PRESIDENCY, WE WILL MAKE LEECHES GREAT AGAIN!
AND THANKS TO YOUR DIVINELY-INSPIRED GOVERNANCE, OUR BRAVE SECRET POLICE ARE KIDNAPPING RECORD NUMBERS OF PEOPLE! THE AUTOPEN GUY COULD NEVER HAVE ACCOMPLISHED IT!
ICE
NOEM
SIR, YOU ARE THE KINDEST, BRAVEST, WARMEST, MOST WONDERFUL HUMAN BEING I'VE EVER KNOWN IN MY LIFE! AND IF I MAY SAY, VERY IMPRESSIVE WORK ACING THOSE COGNITIVE TESTS!
UH--SIR?
DON'T DISTURB HIM! HE'S BUSY CONCENTRATING INTENTLY ON EVERYTHING WE SAY!
RIGHT! OF COURSE!
I'M AWAKE! ANYONE WHO SAYS OTHERWISE IS GUILTY OF TREASON, WHICH IS PUNISHABLE BY DEATH!
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS MATTER.
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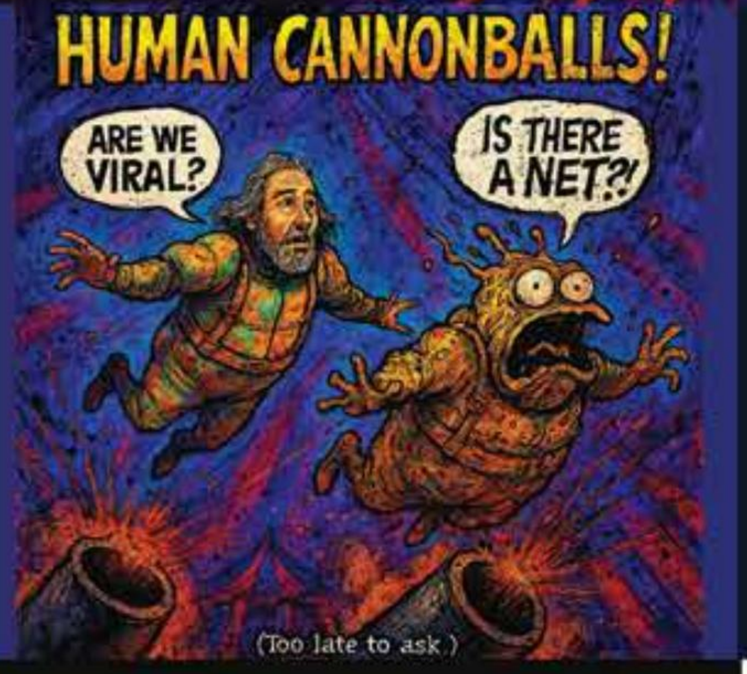

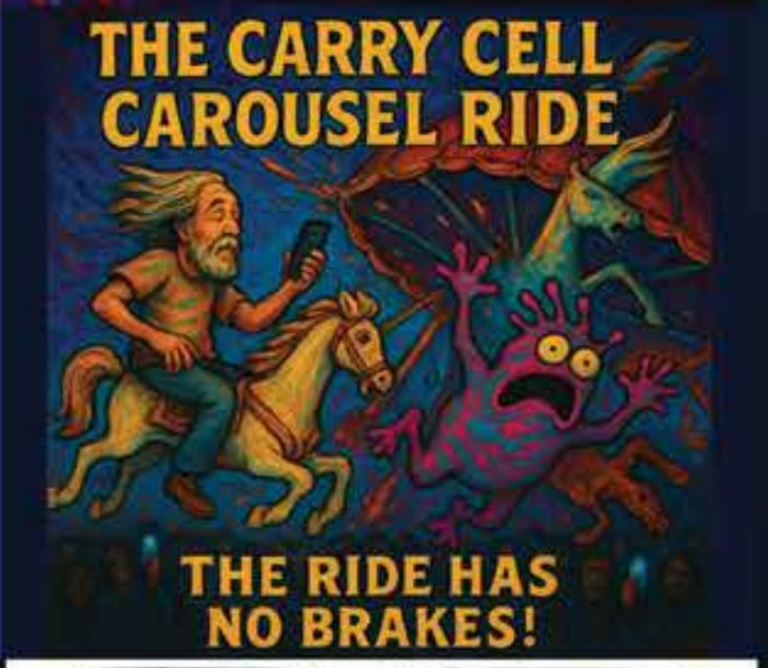

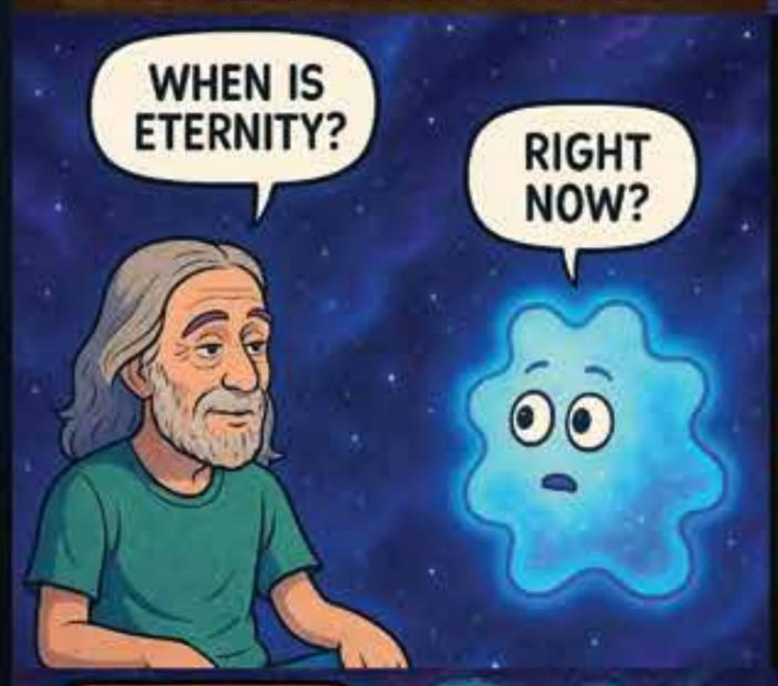

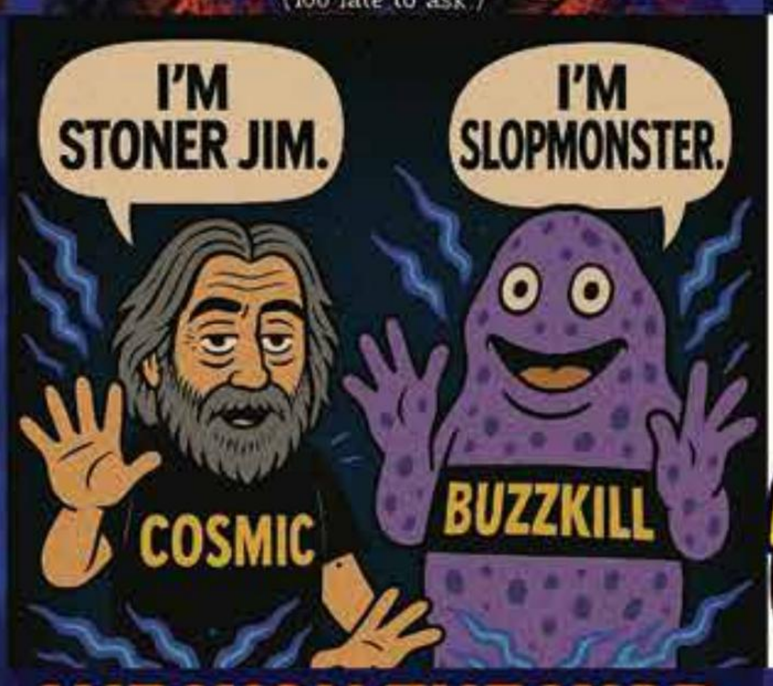

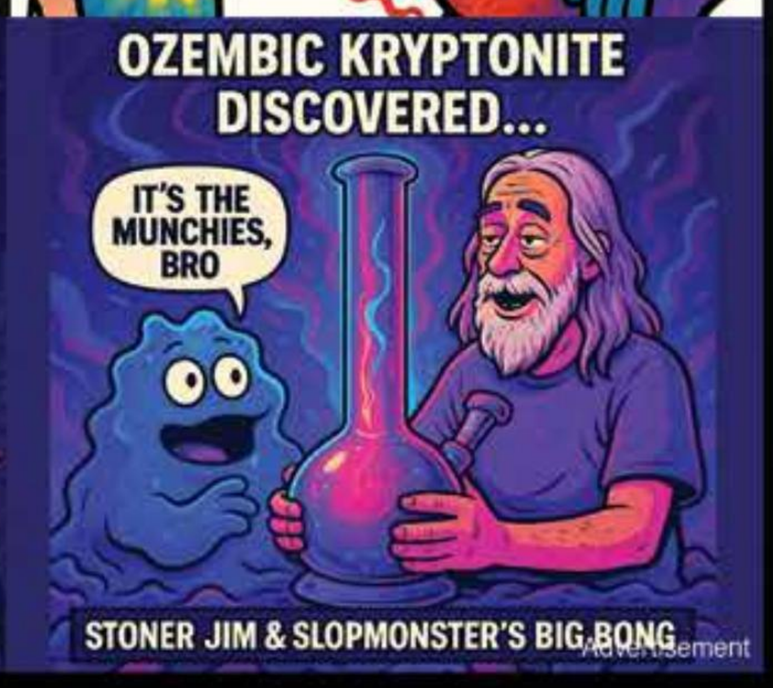

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NEWS & VIEWS

Detroit gets its RoboCop statue

At long last, Detroit finally has its statue of RoboCop. The bronze statue depicting the eponymous cybernetic star of Paul Verhoeven's 1987 set-in-Detroit sci-fi satire was installed in Eastern Market last week, nearly 15 years after someone proposed it in a viral social media post.

Back in 2011, someone with the Twitter account @MT (no, not us) tweeted at then-Mayor Dave Bing that Detroit should have a statue of the part-man, part-machine cop because "Philadelphia has a statue of Rocky & RoboCop would kick Rocky's butt." The tweet continued, "He's a GREAT ambassador for Detroit."

The idea got even more attention after Bing's office responded to it. "There are not any plans to erect a statue to Robocop," Bing tweeted at the time. "Thank you for the suggestion."

Nevertheless, a fan named Brandon Walley launched a crowdfunding effort which eventually raised more than $60,000. A statue was commissioned and constructed by George Gikas of Venus Bronze Works, though the project became mired in years of setbacks and red tape.

Pete Hottelet and Omni Consumer Products also contributed $25,000 and was involved with the production of the statue. Now, RoboCop stands tall outside of 3434 Russell St. in Detroit.

—Lee DeVito

A statue of RoboCop stands in Detroit's Eastern Market. LEE DEVITO

Proposal calls to redevelop part of Packard Plant

Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan last week announced an ambitious plan to transform 28 acres of the long-abandoned Packard Plant into a mixed-use district with housing, manufacturing, and cultural space.

The plan would revive what was once the city's most notorious industrial ruin and turn it into 42 affordable housing units, Detroit's first indoor skate park, the Museum of Detroit Electronic Music, creative community programming, and more than two acres of public and recreational space.

If all goes as planned, the proposal, called Packard Park, will redevelop the southern half of the former plant, including a 117,000-square-foot Albert Kahn-designed building on West Grand Boulevard that was once scheduled for demolition. A new 393,000-square-foot industrial facility will be built for manufacturing and create an estimated 300 full-time manufacturing jobs, according to developers Packard Development Partners LLC, a team led by Mark Bennett and Oren Goldenberg, both of whom have experience with mixed-use developments in the city.

"Five years ago, the Packard Plant was still standing as Detroit's most iconic ruin, continuing to drag down the surrounding neighborhood." Duggan said. "It took an incredible amount of work to gain title to the property and tear down everything that could not be saved in hopes for a day like this."

The estimated price tag for the project is more than $50 million, with funding expected to come from a "layered" capital stack of private investment, commercial debt, philanthropy, tax credits, and state and local development tools. The developers say the project will be finished by 2029, pending final approvals and financing.

Mayor-elect Mary Sheffield, who takes office in January, praised the plan as a turning point for a site that has sat mostly vacant since Packard ceased production in the late 1950s.

"For more than 60 years this site sat idle. Today, we declare that those days are over," Sheffield said. "The Packard Park will be a symbol of what is possible when Detroiters, public partners, and committed developers work together with imagination and purpose. This is how we honor our past while building our future — by preserving history, creating jobs, expanding housing, and investing in culture and community all at once."

The Packard Plant was once among the largest industrial complexes in the world, a sprawling 3.5-million-square-foot symbol of Detroit's early manufacturing prowess. The facility pioneered the reinforced-concrete system that reshaped industrial architecture and employed more than 36,000 workers at its peak.

By the 2000s it had become a symbol of urban decay, a vast, lawless wasteland stripped by scavengers and repeatedly set ablaze. In 2022, the city began demolishing sections of the plant after years of failed redevelopment promises and constant blight complaints. Former owner Fernando Palazuelo promised a high-profile redevelopment, but he failed to pay his property taxes, violated city codes, and failed to make progress.

The Packard Plant became a symbol of Detroit's decline. STEVE NEAVLING

Councilman Scott Benson, who has pushed for redevelopment of the east-side property, said the proposal "represents better days ahead for the Packard site."

"This historic site, once a symbol of industrial might, will now see a new life as a much-needed employment center and housing in our city," Benson said. "I am thrilled to see this plan, which also will provide much needed recreational opportunities, community spaces and jobs on the east side of Detroit. We have waited a long time for progress."

The nonprofit Albert Kahn Legacy Foundation will serve as fiduciary for the philanthropic fundraising campaign tied to the restoration of the Kahn building. The Detroit Regional Partnership also supported the project through its VIP Site Readiness Grant Program.

The co-developers said the new partnership marks the first real momentum at the site in decades.

"Where other efforts have stalled, we feel momentum and a spirit of collaboration to finally redevelop the Packard site as Packard Park," Bennett said.

Goldenberg added, "As stewards to the city, we will work together with neighbors, creators and our P4 partners, to complete this purpose-driven development that will bring culture, housing and jobs to the city for this generation and beyond."

Developers expect to begin detailed planning and community engagement next year.

More information is available at packardpark.com, and leasing inquiries are being handled by Signature Associates.

—Steve Neavling

Thanedar files articles of impeachment against Secretary of Defense

U.S. Rep. Shri Thanedar has filed articles of impeachment against another Trump administration official.

Last week, the Detroit Democrat filed articles of impeachment against U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth for allegedly issuing orders to "kill everybody" aboard a Venezuelan drug smuggling boat in September and discussing pending attacks on Yemen in a group chat in March.

"Pete Hegseth is uniquely unqualified to serve as Secretary of Defense," Thanedar said in a statement. "Every day he serves in this role, he puts American servicemembers and their families in danger. He gave direct, unlawful orders to kill every single person on a civilian boat from Venezuela, violating the Defense Department's Law of War Manual."

He added, "Additionally, his mishandling of classified information, leaking war plans in a Signal chat which included sensitive operations details, including target systems and attack times, has put American lives at risk. He can no longer serve as our Secretary of Defense, which is why I am introducing these articles of impeachment."

The congressman announced the articles of impeachment at a rally in Washington, D.C. on Thursday.

Thanedar, a billionaire entrepreneur from the pharmaceutical industry and immigrant from India, represents parts of Detroit, downriver, and the Grosse Pointe communities.

In April, Thanedar filed seven articles of impeachment against President Donald Trump, including allegations of corruption, freedom of speech violations, obstruction of justice, unlawfully gutting government agencies, and other actions he considered high crimes and misdemeanors.

"In this country, we have presidents, not kings," Thanedar said at the time. "This is not just misconduct. This is impeachable misconduct. This isn't leadership; it's tyranny. If we let this stand, we are saying the president is above the law."

The attempt was discouraged by Democratic Party leadership, and nothing came of it.

Last week, Democratic House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries of New York dismissed the possibility of impeaching Hegseth.

"Republicans will never allow articles of impeachment to be brought to the floor of the House of Representatives, and we know that's the case," he said, adding that he believed Hegseth should resign instead.

U.S. Rep. Shri Thanedar. SHUTTERSTOCK

The House voted to impeach Trump twice during his first term for pressuring Ukraine to investigate political rival Joe Biden in exchange for military aid and for inciting the Jan. 6, 2020 attack on the U.S. Capitol, but Senate Republicans blocked the efforts.

—Lee DeVito

Detroit man's wrongful conviction became the blueprint for sweeping criminal justice reform

This is the fourth installment in "Exploring Integrity: Reviewing Wrongful Conviction Remedies," a series examining the impact of conviction integrity units on the American judicial system's rate of wrongful conviction. Presented by the O'Brien Fellowship in Public Service Journalism, the investigation is supported by Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Eric Anderson's first plan for college was derailed by a nine-year prison sentence.

During the time he spent serving a wrongful conviction, he might have earned multiple degrees, had he not been misidentified as the suspect in a Detroit armed robbery.

"At the time, I was going to Wayne County Community College, two weeks from finals," Anderson recalls, "and in the fall I was going to transfer to Michigan State. So all of this was on my mind."

Having been the subject of a collaborative case review spearheaded by the Quattrone Center for the Fair Administration of Justice at the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School, Anderson was recently reconnected to academia. A Nov. 17 media announcement, during which Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy pledged to increase efforts to reduce wrongful convictions like Anderson's, discussed Quattrone Center recommendations designed to benefit law enforcement, prosecutors, and the conviction integrity unit that helped free him.

"The recommendations are good because, clearly, I fall in line," says Anderson. "My case is used as a measuring stick to identify these issues."

In an incident unrelated to his case, Anderson was shot in the foot at a downtown-area diner about 10 miles from where the robbery occurred, proving his whereabouts. Although Anderson was captured on surveillance at the Coney Island where he was wounded, he was accused by one of the robbery victims who pulled Anderson's image from a social media page.

"They chose to work this case in a way to disprove my alibi," Anderson says of investigators.

But failures occurred beyond the investigation, according to Quattrone's report, known as the Sentinel Event Review — including pre-trial when a judge asked Anderson if he was "stupid" for rejecting a plea deal offered by prosecutors.

John Hollway, senior advisor to the Quattrone Center, told media who attended the Sentinel Event Review press conference that its review wasn't "about blame."

"It is about building a safer, more transparent and more reliable justice system," he said.

Anderson recalls falling through judicial cracks at "every level."

"Like Swiss cheese," he adds, "through all these holes with no support."

The early work of the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office CIU led to Anderson's freedom in 2019, a year after it accepted his case for reinvestigation. He was among the first 10 exonerees, but Anderson says his exoneration and other initial CIU victories might have contributed to one of its ongoing challenges: "After I was released, of course you have innocent people submitting requests to try to regain their freedom, but I'm sure you have guilty people trying to get their reviews, too, which leads to backlogs. The backlogs create a waiting list and that stalls people who deserve their freedom from getting it."

Along with a place in the National Registry of Exonerations, created by the University of Michigan Innocence Clinic, which aided in Anderson's exoneration, he has found himself reconnected to college. Anderson regularly visits law schools, but as a guest speaker now, not as the student he'd been when his education and life were disrupted. Anderson also serves as a training consultant to public defenders in Michigan and to law enforcement in Illinois.

Despite the work of the Quattrone Center, CIU and other advocates for improved law enforcement and prosecutorial methods, he remains haunted by the notion that prison can result from a simple witness error or lie.

"One of the biggest problems with wrongful convictions is misidentification, right?" he asks.

"You'll remember things that never existed," Anderson adds, "because it fits the narrative at a certain point."

—Eddie B. Allen Jr.

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SEAN BLACKMAN'S IN TRANSIT
No Cover / 7-10pm / 21+

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DJ DEZ ANDRÉS presents THE FUNCTION
10pm / 21+ / Occasional Special Guests

THURSDAY DECEMBER 18
ELIXIR
JOHN RYAN - GEO
No Cover / 8-12am / 21+

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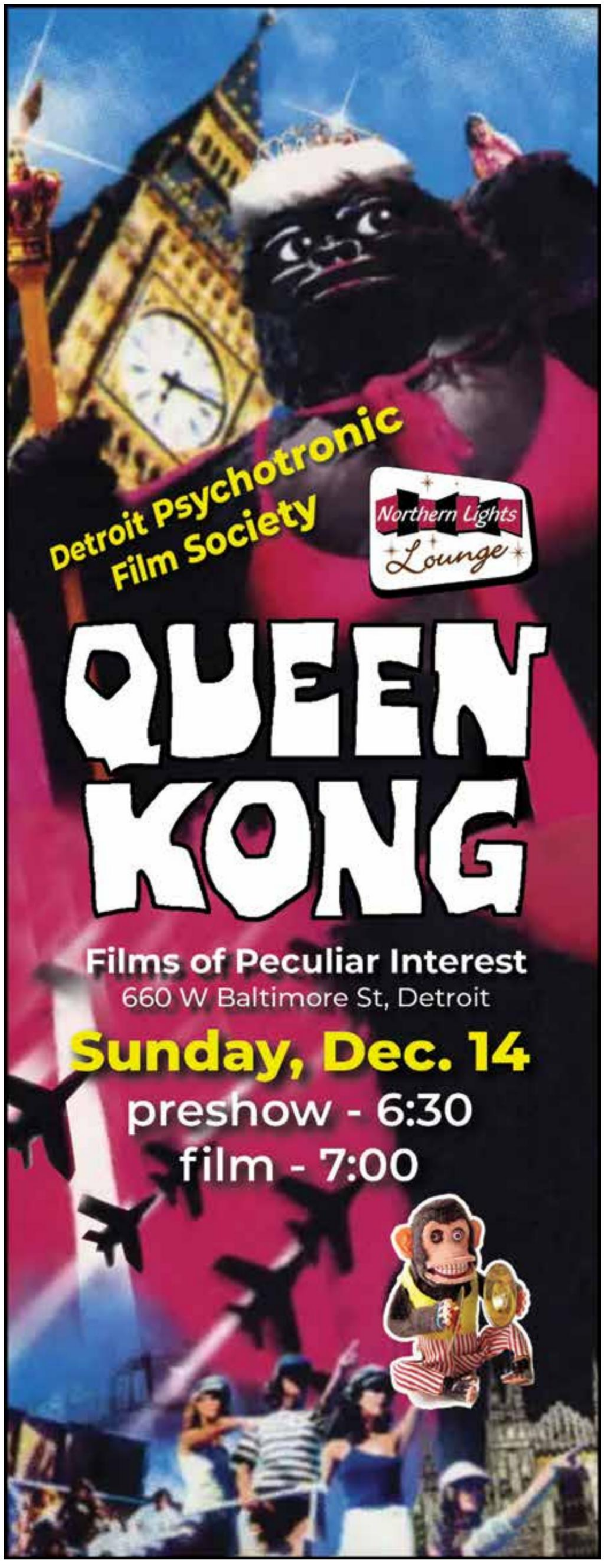

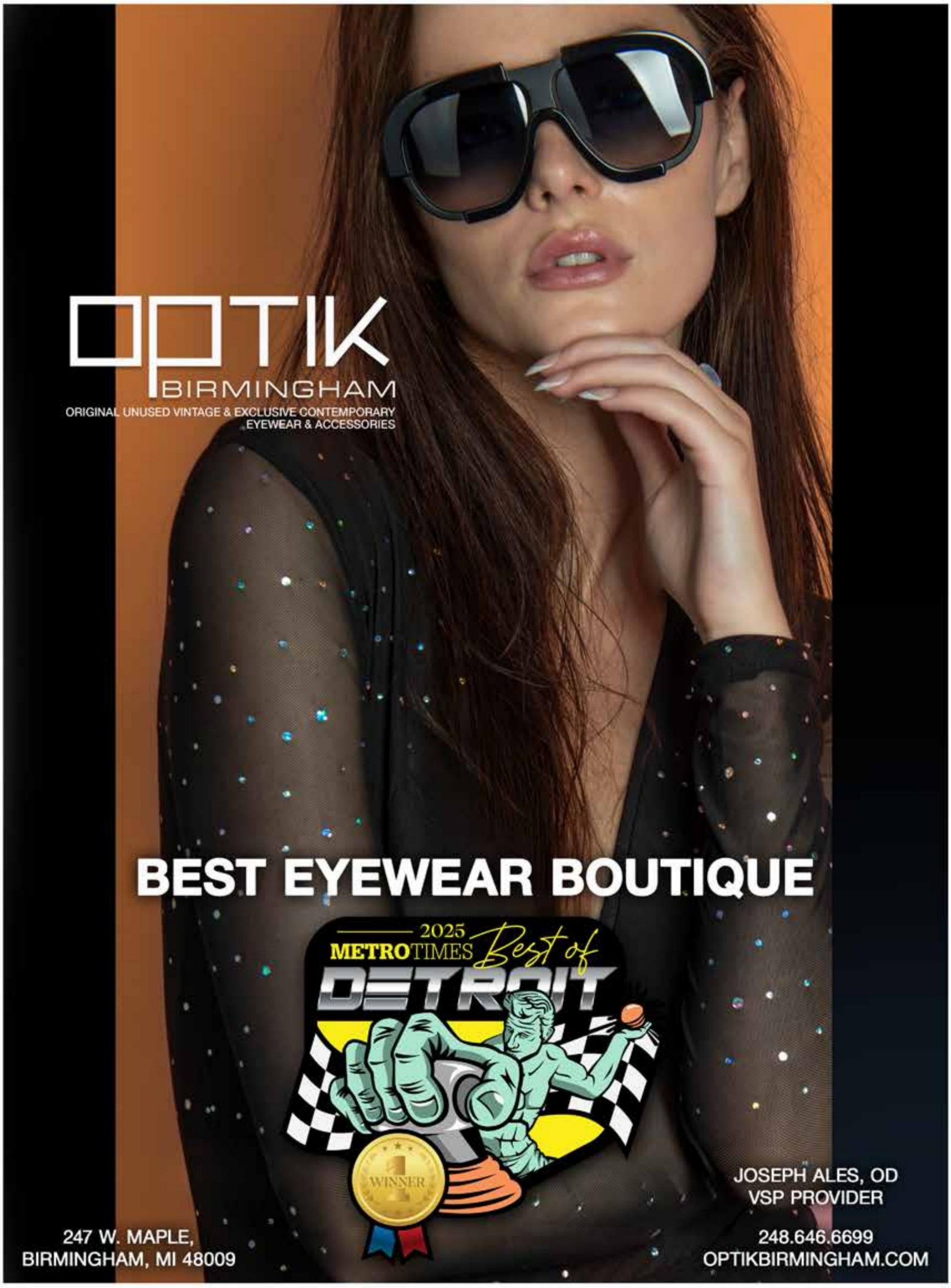
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THE RISE, FALL, AND UNCERTAIN FUTURE OF THE HISTORIC

LELAND

As power shutoff threats loom and residents pack up their lives, a century of history hangs in the balance

By Steve Neavling

The first floor of the historic Leland House in downtown Detroit felt as cold as the street outside. That's where Dianne Lamb stood on a recent morning, bundled in a hooded winter coat, her breath visible in the unheated air. She'd slept two hours and was worn out from packing. For the past 12 years, she's lived in a one-bedroom apartment in the fabled building.

Until the day after Thanksgiving, the 58-year-old thought she'd retire here.

Then management handed out letters at the front desk saying DTE Energy planned to cut the power and everyone had to be out within five days because of unpaid electricity bills that are now in the six figures.

"We just wanted more time," Lamb says, her voice hoarse from exhaustion. "People have been here 15, 20 years. I've been here 12. Some people don't have anywhere to go. I don't have anywhere to go, and I really don't have friends that can take me in. I don't have any family. This is just insane. It's crazy."

Even now, it's easy to forget that the 98-year-old Leland was an opulent and storied hotel, drawing baseball stars, gangsters, opera singers, union leaders, and celebrities long before becoming one of the last affordable buildings downtown.

To make ends meet, Lamb works two jobs. She rides her bike to one and catches the bus from the nearby Rosa Parks Transit Center for the other. Her apartment costs hundreds less than anything similar in downtown Detroit, where prices have soared as investors convert neglected buildings into pricey apartments and lofts. The average rent in downtown is now $1,817, a steep increase over the past decade, making it inaccessible to most Detroiters. That's more than double the average rent at the Leland.

"This was perfect," Lamb says of the Leland, her eyes welling in tears. "I could afford it. I really like it here."

Now she's trying to line up a new place, but she worries she won't find anything she can afford nearby, where her job and bus connection are.

And she's far from alone. The Leland House rents out about 40 occupied units at affordable prices, making it one of the last places downtown where working-class tenants, artists, service workers, and retirees can afford to live.

A building in limbo

On a frigid morning on Dec. 1, three days after receiving the notice to leave the building, U-Haul trucks lined the block outside the Leland, where frustrated tenants loaded their belongings. To make matters worse, the only working elevator gave out as tenants were moving out, unable to handle the heavy load of people, boxes, and furniture.

It felt like the end of an era.

For Emanuel "Butter" Hill, who has lived at the Leland for 18 years and does maintenance work there, the thought of moving out and never seeing his neighbors again brought him to tears.

"We've got people who've been here for 40 years," Hill says, pausing to steady his voice. "We're like family here. This building means so much to us. We're a community."

After some tenants had already moved out, DTE Energy agreed to give the Leland House Limited Partnership until Dec. 5 to pay a $57,000 deposit on the overdue power bills to keep the power on. On Dec. 4, the U.S. Bankruptcy Court approved a last-minute arrangement after the Leland secured a $1.2 million short-term, high-interest loan. Judge Maria Oxholm barred DTE from cutting off power without her approval. Some of the money, she said, must be used to pay the DTE deposit and maintain casualty insurance.

"Several people worked tirelessly in a very short period of time to obtain the financing for the Leland and to do everything possible to make sure the residents had electricity in their apartments," Luis Ramirez, a representative for Leland House, said in a statement after the court hearing. "Ownership looks forward to doing everything possible to keep the residents in place, and protect their health, safety and welfare."

Under the agreement, the debt must be repaid once the building is expected to be sold next spring. But nothing about the sale is certain, and details about the plans remain murky.

'That building has a soul'

The crisis at the Leland has been mounting for decades. Originally a glamorous

A lonesome person drinks at the Leland's modest lobby bar. STEVE NEAVLING

hotel that attracted famous guests during Detroit's heyday, the building at Cass and Bagley is in Chapter 11 bankruptcy, facing a city nuisance lawsuit, and is millions in debt.

The building's long decline has been especially painful for former workers like Mary Buckshaw Konkel, who spent 17 years there and still dreams about the place.

"Anybody who worked there long enough will tell you — that building had a soul," she says. "If you were sensitive to it, you could feel the darkness too. Not ghosts. Just everything she had gone through. She never got the renovation she needed. Just band-aids."

For residents, the Leland is far from perfect, but it has a magnetism that's hard to explain to anyone who hasn't lived there or frequented its eclectic nightclub. It's also one of the last downtown buildings where working-class people can afford to stay.

"I always looked at the Leland as fantasy, but for a lot of people, it was a reality because it became a life-saver and sanctuary for so many people," Konkel says. "People stayed because they finally felt like they belonged somewhere. They overlooked the idiosyncrasies."

That's true for Daryl Stewart, a 67-year-old artist and percussionist who toured with Parliament-Funkadelic and moved to the Leland in 2012 for $450 a month.

"It can be a beautiful monster," Stewart says of the Leland. "The monster part is what we have to deal with. The beautiful part is the humanism that came forward."

Konkel's title was director of theatrical housing, but she filled in when other work was needed. She painted, patched, reglazed tubs, served drinks. She says her mission was to give tenants a sense of comfort, even as the building around them deteriorated.

"We made people feel like they could be themselves and feel like this was their home," Konkel says. "Some people lived there 20 years on month-to-month rent. They felt part of something. It was the Leland community."

Living at the Leland came with tradeoffs. In the winter, many residents relied on electric space heaters. By summer, the building baked. A 2022 city inspection found standing water in the basement, submerged electrical equipment, missing smoke detectors, no heat in common areas, and only one working elevator. The city sued, calling the building "a danger to the safety and welfare of the public" and "not fit for human habitation." A 2014 fire exposed a nonfunctioning standpipe system, forcing firefighters to battle the flames with handheld extinguishers.

The building's slow decline began to take a toll on Konkel.

"That building could be an energy vampire. It really drained you," Konkel says. "But I will always be proud to say I worked at the Leland. We put our heart and soul into it."

A glamorous start

The Leland is the kind of building that reminds you that Detroit once brimmed with people and possibility, a city that roared with industry and grew, for a time, into the nation's fourth-largest city. When the building opened as the Leland Hotel in 1927, it was pure glamour, featuring more than 700 rooms with private baths, nearly a dozen shops, an opulent ballroom, and a towering lobby with 17-foot-tall arched windows.

Designed in the Italian Renaissance style by Rapp & Rapp, a Chicago architectural firm better known for ornate movie palaces like Detroit's Michigan Theatre, the Leland boasts a stately exterior clad in brick and terra cotta with granite trim.

When the hotel opened, Detroit was a boomtown with 1.5 million residents. At the time, the Leland competed with about 200 hotels within one mile of downtown, according to the Detroit Convention and Tourist Bureau.

The hotel employed 550 people, compared to the handful that work at the building now.

The building's elegance and modern amenities attracted many famous people, from mobsters to sports legends. The hotel's Hideaway Bar on the fourth floor became a hangout for legendary union leader Jimmy Hoffa and his fellow International Brotherhood of Teamsters leaders. Detroit's notorious Purple Gang also used the hotel's bar and ballroom to meet. In 1955, United Auto Workers President Walter Reuther and Ford's chief negotiator John Bugas hammered out their landmark guaranteed-wage agreement at the Leland.

When Hoffa disappeared in July 1975, the Leland was one of the first places police checked. In the 1980s, the FBI dug up the basement in search of Hoffa's body but found no trace of him.

The names of the hotel's famous guests are too long to list, but they include baseball legends such as Babe Ruth and Hank Greenberg, musicians George Clinton and Usher, opera stars, Ice Capades performers, and reportedly gangster Al Capone.

By the mid-1960s, the hotel transitioned into the Leland House, a combination apartment-hotel with an outdoor pool and parking garage. It joined the Ramada hotel chain in 1988, then reclaimed its historic name just before Detroit hosted the Super Bowl in 2006. In 2005, the Leland landed on the National Register of Historic Places.

First opened in 1927, the Leland House has a storied history in Detroit. STEVE NEAVLING

Fading and neglected

But as Detroit's population plummeted and jobs migrated to the suburbs in the 1960s, the city lost its stature. The Leland began a decades-long decline that stripped away much of its grandeur.

After a series of ownership changes, local developer Mike Higgins bought the building but struggled to maintain it.

In 2018, Higgins stood on Mackinac Island and announced a $120 million top-to-bottom renovation plan that promised hundreds of affordable and market-rate apartments and a 650-space parking deck by 2020. Rockford Construction signed on as development manager.

The plans never materialized, and Higgins nearly lost the building to tax foreclosure. Rockford also sued Higgins over nearly $430,000 in unpaid work.

In a lawsuit filed by the city in 2022, Detroit officials claimed the building was "in a state of decay, deterioration, and dilapidation," noting that inspectors found a lack of heat in common areas, broken smoke detectors, a malfunctioning elevator, and standing water in the basement.

Tenants and former employees describe Higgins as brilliant, charismatic, and imaginative, but not always grounded in reality. He later developed

heart problems, and his habit of eating steak and candy bars didn't help. They remember him fondly for caring about his tenants and giving working-class people a place to live, even if he didn't deliver on his promises.

"Mike was a visionary, but sometimes you have to hand over the reins to people who know what they're doing and care about the building and the people," Konkel says. "Mike was very, very good at acquiring properties, but he wasn't as good at managing them."

Others agree.

Higgins died in 2023. His estate filed for bankruptcy in November, listing more than $20 million in debt and leaving the building's fate in question.

The 'Disneyland of industrial bars'

One of Leland's lasting legacies is City Club, a legendary goth-and-industrial haunt that became a sanctuary for anyone searching for a place where weirdness was celebrated. In 1983, Higgins turned the grand ballroom into a dark, pulsating club originally called Liedernacht, which translates to "night song" in German. But after a fight with his club partner, Higgins went solo and changed the name to City Club in 1985.

For the next four decades, Detroit's "Disneyland of industrial bars," as a onetime regular described it, was a grimy sanctuary for goths, punks, ravers, and anyone who wanted to let their freak out. It was normal to see someone in head-to-toe rubber, cyber-dreads, or a gas mask chain-smoking outside at 3 a.m.

City Club hosted renowned national acts such as Marilyn Manson, Nine Inch Nails, Rob Zombie, the Beasties Boys, Smashing Pumpkins, Public Enemy, Skinny Puppy, and Depeche Mode. For years, the cover charge stayed at $3 or $4.

Sybil Carter, who began cleaning ovens at the Leland in the mid-1980s, took charge of the club during its infancy after Higgins asked her to manage it. To get the word out about the club, Carter handed out free passes at malls and other places where young people flocked. Students at the College for Creative Studies hung their work on the walls. Local artist Jeremy Harvey moved in and created surreal circus murals. The whole place operated more on creativity and grit than money.

"It was never in the shape that people think a club should be," Carter says. "But I think that was the draw. It was cleaned all the time, but it didn't look like it was."

She once made the Beastie Boys rap for her at the door to prove their identity, and then threw them out minutes later for trying to look up women's skirts, she recalled for a colorful *Metro Times* story in 2012.

The Leland was once an opulent hotel favored among celebrities. STEVE NEAVLING

As with most good things at the Leland, age and neglect began to catch up with the club, making it increasingly unsafe for the people who worked, partied, and performed there. Without heat in the club, Higgins relied on aging forced-air units for a little warmth. Pipes froze and burst, and electrical failures became routine. The lighting was sparse, leaving parts of the club in near-darkness.

Troy Parker, a onetime regular, developed a friendship with Higgins and implored him to get the place up to code. He says the City Club was "roasting in the summer and freezing in the winter."

"It was a dark hole. You couldn't see people," Parker recalls. "I told him we'd have to do it on the cheap because he wouldn't invest. He just wanted space heaters. I told him you can't run a club like that, but I did what I could."

With Higgins's blessing around 2010, Parker spent three years trying to "get rid of the dungeon feel" and make the club safer. He patched up old wiring, installed industrial fans, added space heaters for the employees, and made other improvements. Higgins invested in a new stage with lighting, but that was about it.

Parker says city inspectors no longer let things slide.

"Those were different times," the 63-year-old says. "This was before Detroit started changing, back when the city looked the other way. Things are different now. They aren't turning a blind eye anymore."

Still, the club kept going because it meant a lot to people. It offered them a freedom they couldn't get elsewhere. City Club was where artists worked the door, where young queer people found each other, and where shy suburban misfits could become glittering, leather-clad demigods for a night.

"Music saved their soul and sanity. I think that is why City Club was so important to so many people," Konkel said. "You can dress how you want and dance how you want. Not everyone has to come in with black lipstick and Alice Cooper eyes."

Like many legendary bars and theaters in Detroit, City Club could soon become another unique space swallowed by time and neglect, clearing the path for a downtown increasingly dominated by high-end lofts and shops. Detroit is a graveyard of odd, beautiful spots left to die.

"City Club survived about 40 years. That's a long run," Parker says. "It never had any money behind it, but lots of clubs closed while City Club kept going. But I think the final nail in the coffin is coming. It lasted as long as it could."

'What are we going to do?'

For tenants, the prospect of losing their homes less than a month before the holidays was devastating. Many can't afford higher rents and have no idea where they'll sleep next week. Their fate is now in the hands of a monopoly utility and a handful of wealthy investors.

Getting only a few days' warning struck many of them as callous and cruel. DTE Energy CEO Gerardo Norcia's total compensation in 2024 was about $12.6 million, a 22.5% increase over the previous year. In 2024, DTE reported $1.4 billion in profits and sent $607 million to Wall Street shareholders. Meanwhile, customers are getting hit with steep increases. In January, regulators approved a $217 million electric rate hike.

Meanwhile, the remaining tenants just want some certainty, and maybe some compassion.

"We're all asking, 'What the fuck? What are we going to do?'" Stewart says. "Some people have been here for 30 years. It's not a bunch of 19- and 20-year-olds. There are people here who can't just get up and move."

State law requires utilities like DTE to give tenants in multi-units at least 30 days' written notice before shutting off power when the landlord hasn't paid the bill. That didn't happen in this case, tenants say.

Asked about the notices, DTE spokesperson Amanda Passage insisted in a written statement to *Metro Times* that the company followed the law.

"As with all customers who own multi-unit dwellings, in compliance with regulatory requirements, we provided a 30-day public notice on all entrances and exits of the building to inform tenants of potential disconnect," Passage said.

Tenants are adamant they never saw notices.

"They are lying through their teeth,"

The Old Miami

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(FUNK/PSYCH JAZZ/POP PUNK/SYNTH CELLO)
DOORS@9P/$5COVER

Sat 12/20
SANTARCHY BAR CRAWL: DIVAS VS DIVAS
(MONTHLY) / LADY DJ'S
DOORS@9P/$5COVER

Sun 12/21
NFL GAMEDAY: DETROIT LIONS VS
PITTSBURGH STEELERS (HOME)
WATCH THE GAME ON OUR BIG SCREENS!
4:25PM KICKOFF

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CHRISTMAS DAY: OPEN NOON-2AM

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MINNESOTA VIKINGS (AWAY)
WATCH THE GAME ON OUR BIG SCREENS!
4:30PM KICKOFF

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(DETROIT TECHNO)
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Matthew Erard, an attorney who has lived at the Leland for 16 years, says. "I'm not aware of anyone having seen a posted notice from DTE at any point in time."

City leaders are also to blame, tenants say. Erard points to a city ordinance that requires Detroit's building department to set up a rent-escrow account within five days of a shutoff notice, notify tenants, and use those funds to keep the utilities on if enough money is collected. Erard says he spoke to multiple supervisors at the Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department (BSEED) and was unable to find "anyone who was at all familiar with its provisions or willing to review them."

"It is extremely troubling that the city has legislatively enacted procedures governing the precise circumstances that we're confronting – which would enable tenants to prevent the shut off from occurring, while also ensuring utilities are paid — but yet the city department charged with executing those procedures is neglecting to fulfill its legal obligations," Erard says.

In a statement to *Metro Times*, Detroit Corporation Counsel Conrad Mallett disputed claims that the city did anything wrong.

"The Ordinance citation you reference was designed to provide a solution to a single issue — a landlord collecting rent but not paying utility bills," Mallett said. "It was not designed to address a multi-faceted issue of non-payment of utility bills and building bankruptcy and a laundry list of long-standing health and safety issues due to poor building conditions — all of which exist at the same time at the Leland House."

He added that "the law department has been working for at least two years to get the owner to remedy the building conditions, to no avail, and we are still in court on this issue."

It should be noted that Mayor Mike Duggan, who has not publicly weighed in on the situation, has received tens of thousands of dollars in campaign donations from DTE executives and the company's political action committee.

"It's winter. This isn't our doing," Lamb says. "This is the owner's doing. We just thought DTE would be more sympathetic."

As Stewart put it, "DTE, these motherfuckers are always picking on the little man."

An uncertain future

What happens next is anyone's guess.

"It's rage against the machine," Stewart says. "We're up against corporate America. They really want us out of here, and they want the property. ... This is the new Detroit."

Hill says it's sad and frustrating that Detroiters who stuck through the hard times are brushed aside for big-pocketed investors.

"No developer is more important than the people who live here," Hill says. "The ones who struggled and never left the city, the ones who built the city back up, they are not getting anything."

Even from afar, Konkel shares their heartbreak.

"I still dream that I'm walking through the Leland, and it's beautiful again," she says. "That building wanted to shine. It has gone through so many tragedies. "

Konkel left before the Leland got the best of her, but she still loves the building and its residents.

"We are survivors," she says. "I gave everything I could and had nothing left to give. I had to keep my soul and my sanity. The building needs to hear that it was a sanctuary for people."

Birmingham-based Tir Equities LLC, owned by real estate investor Ara Darakjian, has been trying to buy the Leland House and is in talks with Higgins's company. But Darakjian said the sale cannot move forward until major repairs are completed and the building's outstanding bills are settled. He has an option to buy the building, but any deals are on hold until the bankruptcy case plays out.

Darakjian has not publicly shared his plans for the building, and he declined to comment for this story through his spokesperson.

Whatever happens, bigger questions remain: Who gets to stay downtown as the last affordable spaces disappear? And what happens to a historic, storied building that held Detroit's artists, workers, musicians, misfits, and elders for nearly a century?

The Leland has survived fires, bankruptcies, and decades of neglect. Its remaining residents and City Club may not be as lucky. MT

Leland tenant Dianne Lamb worries she will be evicted. STEVE NEAVLING

Museum of Illusions Detroit

Detroit's latest museum brings mind-bending illusions — and plenty of fun photo opportunities — to the Himelhoch's Building downtown. The Museum of Illusions Detroit opened to the public last week, featuring more than 80 mind-bending exhibitions including a titled room, a vortex tunnel, a Beuchet chair, holograms, and other optical illusions. The museum is part of the global Museum of Illusions Group, which bills itself as the largest and fastest-growing chain of private museums in the world with more than 60 locations.

Open 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and 10 a.m.-10 p.m. on Friday-Saturday; 1545 Woodward Ave., Detroit; moidetroit.com. Tickets start at $22, with 20% off all tickets through Dec. 21.

Detroit Psychotronic Film Society presents Queen Kong

The nation's capital has the Washington Psychotronic Film Society, a club that has screened cult, low-budget, offbeat, or otherwise wild and wacky movies for more than 35 years. The Detroit Psychotronic Film Society is bringing its own version of this to Northern Lights Lounge. Next up is *Queen Kong*, a 1976 gender-swapped version of *King Kong* that the DPFS calls "one of the most deranged comedies ever" with "a giant female ape complete with tits." If that sounds intriguing to you, head to Northern Lights Lounge.

Event starts at 6:30 p.m., film starts at 7 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 14; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St., Detroit. No cover, donations welcome.

GRiZMAS

Hot off of nabbing a slot as one of the mighty Bonnaroo Music Festival's headlining acts, alongside big names like the Strokes and Teddy Swims, metro Detroit's sax-playing DJ GRiZ is capping off his annual 12 Days of GRiZMAS festivities around town with back-to-back nights at the Masonic

Museum of Illusions. COURTESY PHOTO

Temple. Friday's show features support from Whethan and Austeria, while Saturday's got Vincent Antone and Motifv.

Doors at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 19 and Saturday, Dec. 20; Masonic Temple Theatre, 500 Temple St., Detroit; themasonic.com.

Holiday Hop & Roll Starring Louie Lee and Friends

Headlined by local country-rap act Louie Lee, this Christmas-themed event promises an "adrenaline-fueled" concert, live magic from Ryan Christopher, and laughs from host Yorg Detroit. Holiday-themed costumes — think Santas, elves, reindeer, etc. — are encouraged for what is sure to be a unique party.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m., show starts at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 20; Diamondback Music Hall, I-94 Service Dr., Van Buren Twp.; diamondbackmusichall.com. Tickets are $40.11-$65.86.

Tinsel & Tassels – A Burlesk Holiday Showcase

Here's one way to heat up this winter. Greektown's new Tip-Top Showbar is hosting an evening of burlesque featuring some of metro Detroit's hottest performers. Ada Vice, Leena Allure, Josephine Shaker, Margaux Royale, and Aqua Tofana will keep things naughty and nice, with Tommy Gun serving as the evening's M.C. Also expect special guests, pop-ups, fabulous prizes, and more. VIP seating is also available.

Doors at 7:30 p.m., show starts at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 20.; Tip-Top Showbar, 440 E. Lafayette St., Detroit; app.gopassage.com. Tickets start at $22. Ages 21 and older only.. MT

Leena Allure unwraps for Tinsel & Tassels at Tip-Top Showbar. AUTUMN LUCIANO

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WHAT'S GOING ON CONT'D

MUSIC

Wednesday Dec 10

Live/Concert

CAYF Presents Detroit Is Alive! Feat; Urban Arts Orchestra 7 pm; Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit;

Christmas with Chris Tomlin and special guest Jamie MacDonald 7 pm; Northridge Church, 49555 N. Territorial Rd., Plymouth;

CLASSIC LOUNGE SOUNDS w/ KESHTKAR & CO. second Wednesday of every month, 8-11 pm; Bowlero Lanes & Lounge, 4209 Coolidge Hwy., Royal Oak; 0.

Cubist Agenda 8 pm-midnight; First Place Lounge, 16921 Harper Ave, Detroit; No Cover.

Dijon 7 pm; The Fillmore, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

Earl Sweatshirt 3LWorld Tour 7 pm; Magic Stick, 4120 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

The Function with DJ Dez Andres 9 pm-2 am; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St., Detroit; no cover.

Greyhaven, Fox Lake, Commoner 6 pm; Sanctuary Detroit, 2932 Caniff St., Hamtramck;

Magic Bag Presents: Squirrel Nut Zippers Christmas Caravan 2025 7 pm; Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale;

Sessions @ The Vinyl Society 8-11 pm; Vinyl Society, 1427 Randolph Street, Detroit; Free.

Telekinetic Yeti with special guest Thunderchief + Solar Monolith 7 pm; Small's, 10339 Conant St., Hamtramck;

The Tea Party 7:30 pm; Caesars Palace Windsor - Augustus Ballroom, 377 E. Riverside Dr., Windsor;

Cubist Agenda 8 pm-midnight; First Place Lounge, 16921 Harper Ave, Detroit; No Cover.

The Function with DJ Dez Andres 9 pm-2 am; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St., Detroit; no cover.

Sessions @ The Vinyl Society 8-11 pm; Vinyl Society, 1427 Randolph Street, Detroit; Free.

DJ/Dance

Planet Funk 7-10 pm; Spkr Box, 200 Grand River, Detroit;

Way Back Wednesdays w. DJ Righteous 8 am-11:59 pm; New Dodge Lounge, 8850 Joseph Campau Ave., Hamtramck; 5.

Karaoke/Open Mic

Continuing This Week Karaoke/ Open Mic

Hump Day Karaoke & Music Trivia 8 pm-1 am; Pronto! Royal Oak, 608 S. Washington, Royal Oak; No Cover.

Thursday Dec 11

Live/Concert

Belmont 6 pm; The Shelter, 431 E. Congress St., Detroit;

Beton Arme with Dark Thoughts 7 pm; Small's, 10339 Conant St., Hamtramck;

Chamber Orchestra of Europe 7:30 pm; Hill Auditorium, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor; Starting at $20.

Dueling Pianos: An Interactive Entertainment Experience 8 pm-midnight; AXIS Lounge, 1777 3rd St., Detroit;

Holidaze Punk In-Store Concert 12-11 pm; Reware Vintage, 2965 12 Mile Road, Suite 200, Berkley; $10 or PWYC.

Marrow in The Market Food & Music Series - Motown Holiday w/ Ben Sharkey 6-7:30 & 8:30-10 pm; Marrow in The Market, 2442 Riopelle Street, Detroit; 114.00.

Midland 8 pm; Caesars Palace Windsor - Augustus Ballroom, 377 E. Riverside Dr., Windsor;

Shakey Graves w/ Clover County 8 pm; Garden Bowl, 4120 Woodward, Detroit;

The Steepwater Band 8 pm; The Token Lounge, 28949 Joy Rd., Westland;

Dueling Pianos: An Interactive Entertainment Experience 8 pm-midnight; AXIS Lounge, 1777 3rd St., Detroit;

DJ/Dance

Curated Cool 7-10 pm; Spkr Box, 200 Grand River, Detroit;

DSC 2025 Holiday Party + Fundraiser 7-10 pm; UFO Bar, 2110 Trumbull Ave., Detroit; Donation Based Entry.

Karaoke/Open Mic

Continuing This Week Karaoke/ Open Mic

Drag Queen Karaoke 8 pm-2 am; Woodward Avenue Brewers, 22646 Woodward Ave., Ferndale; no cover.

Elixer: DJs John Ryan and GEO 8 pm-midnight; Northern Lights Lounge, 660 W. Baltimore St., Detroit; No cover.

Friday Dec 12

Live/Concert

Celtic Woman Christmas Symphony 8 pm; The Music Hall, 350 Madison Ave., Detroit;

The Doo Wop Project presents - A Doo Wop Christmas 8-9:30 pm; FIM Capitol Theatre, 140 E 2nd Street, Flint; $$40.20/$29.90 for Genesee County residents.

Escape Plan, Juandior, Never The Crash, Almost Made The Mixtape 7 pm; Sanctuary Detroit, 2932 Caniff St., Hamtramck;

Lit & Fuel 8 pm; Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit;

Music for the Masses: Dark 80's New Wave Nite 7 pm; The Loving Touch, 22634 Woodward Ave., Ferndale;

Saddle Up Country Dance Party! 8 pm; Diamondback Music Hall, 49345 S. Interstate 94 Service Dr., Belleville;

STORY OF A SONG: A 90s Unplugged Experience 7 pm; District 142, 142 Maple St., Wyandotte;

The Swellers 6 pm; Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress St., Detroit;

WRIF Presents: Highly Suspect - The Mister Anniversary Tour 7:30 pm; The Fillmore, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

DJ/Dance

Ann Arbor Ecstatic Dance second Friday of every month, 7:30-10:30 pm; Ringstar Studio, 3907 Varsity Dr, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108, Ann Arbor; $25-40 ($5 discount for cash).

Open Air Fridays 4-10 pm; Woodbridge Pub, 5169 Trumbull St., Detroit; 0.

Saturday Dec 13

Live/Concert

80s vs 90s: Ugly Sweater and Speedo Party 8 & 8:30 pm; Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale;

Allen Dennard Presents: Swing, Rhythm & Flow 8-11:30 pm; Moondog Cafe, 8045 Linwood St #2, Detroit; $16 in advance / $20 at the door.

Bruiser Wolf, Belve 7 pm; Sanctuary Detroit, 2932 Caniff St., Hamtramck;

Dave Koz And Friends 28TH Christmas Tour 2025 8 pm; The Music Hall, 350 Madison Ave., Detroit;

Dearborn Holiday Choral Festival 6-8 pm; Ford Community & Performing Arts Center, 15801 Michigan Ave., Dearborn; $15-$27.

Emo Night Brooklyn (18+) 8 pm; Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress St., Detroit;

Mannheim Steamroller Christmas 8-10:30 pm; FIM Whiting Auditorium, 1241 E. Kearsley Street, Flint; $50.50 / $37.20 for Genesee County residents.

Slick Rick 8 pm; The Atrium Balllroom - The BW Premier Hotel - Southfield, 26555 Telegraph Rd, Southfield;

Songwriters in the Round a Benefit concert for P.O.W.E.R at MAMA's Coffeehouse 7:30 pm; MAMA's Coffeehouse at the Birmingham Unitarian Church, 38651 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills; $18-$20.

Straight No Chaser 7 pm; Detroit Masonic Temple Library, 500 Temple St, Detroit;

That Mexican OT: Recess Tour - Part 2 7 pm; The Fillmore, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit;

The Feisty Birds, The Analog Dogs 7 pm; The Loving Touch, 22634 Woodward Ave., Ferndale;

VAN HALEN Tribute COMPLETELY UNCHAINED ▪AC/DC Tribute POWERAGE ▪ SCORPIONS Tribute - THE ZOO 7:45 pm; The Token Lounge, 28949 Joy Rd., Westland;

Young Culture 5 pm; The Shelter, 431 E. Congress St., Detroit;

DJ/Dance

Saturday Grind 11 am-3 pm; Spkr Box, 200 Grand River, Detroit;

Sunday Dec 14

Live/Concert

Danity Kane 7:30 pm; Sound Board, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit;

Holiday Story 3-4:30 pm; North Farmington High School, 32900 W. Thirteen Mile Rd., Farmington Hills; Adults $10. Children under 12 are free.

Magic Bag presents: Gary Ho Ho Hoey's Rockin Holiday Show 7 pm; Magic Bag, 22920 Woodward Ave., Ferndale;

Once Upon a December Eve 4-6 pm; The Hawk Theatre, 29995 W 12 Mile Rd, Farmington Hills; $45 in advance, $50 at door.

Phil Ogilvie's Rhythm Kings 5-8 pm; Zal Gaz Grotto Club, 2070 W. Stadium Blvd., Ann Arbor; No Cover (cash tipjar for the band).

Southern Fires presents Jam Sessions ft. Dnise Jonson Band Hosted by Lucretia Sain 6-9 pm; Southern Fires, 575 Bellevue, Detroit. MT

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FOOD

Street Beet celebrates Corktown grand opening

A popular plant-based pop-up in Detroit has laid down roots in Corktown.

After gaining a cult following in recent years serving vegan takes on classic American comfort food, Street Beet is celebrating the grand opening of its first brick-and-mortar restaurant in the former Bobcat Bonnie's space at 1800 Michigan Ave.

The grand opening celebrations officially kick off from 4-11 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 11.

Its menu includes meatless coney dogs, smashburgers, chicken sandwiches, and nachos, as well as milkshakes, malts, and alcohol-free mocktails.

Guests can dine inside for full service or order carryout from a walk-up window.

The space also includes classic arcade and pinball games from Offworld Arcade.

Eventually, the Street Beet will introduce a brunch menu, full service bar, coffee counter with vegan pastries, and patio seating, the restaurant says.

"We've dreamed of this space for years," founder Meghan Shaw said in a statement. "Bringing Street Beet home to Corktown feels unreal — this is our biggest leap yet, and we can't wait to feed everyone again."

Street Beet launched in 2018 serving vegan takes on popular fast food, holding pop-up events with amusing names like McDaddy's and Taco Hell. Starting in 2019, it operated a residency out of the back of Midtown's Third Street Bar.

Earlier this year, Street Beet announced a Birmingham outpost inside an upcoming grocery store and teased additional suburban locations.

It said it partnered with a hedge fund with the goal of "making Street Beet a household name — reaching people from all backgrounds, neighborhoods, and walks of life."

—Lee DeVito

Street Beet has moved into the former Bobcat Bonnie's. COURTESY PHOTO

Balkan House plans first Detroit location

Balkan House, a beloved Detroit-area eatery that has earned scores of fans in recent years with its European-style döner kebabs, will open its first location in the city.

According to *Axios*, Balkan House is one of the first tenants slated for a new development from the nearby Detroit Shipping Co., located a few blocks away at 3700 Third Ave.

The development will reportedly feature multiple restaurants and a bar as part of a concept similar to the Detroit Shipping Co. food hall, with the addition of 10 studio apartments on its second floor.

Developers are aiming for a summer opening date.

Balkan House opened its first location in Hamtramck in 2019 and quickly found a hit among fans of the pita sandwich, popular in cities like Berlin. A Ferndale location soon followed, as well as a food truck, though the original Hamtramck location closed earlier this year.

—Lee DeVito

Ex-Detroit Lion launches coffee blends

Detroit football fans have an opportunity to meet former Lions linebacker Stephen Tulloch as he visits local Kroger stores to launches his coffee brand Circle House Coffee.

"I am incredibly excited to partner with Kroger and bring Circle House Coffee to the Metro Detroit community," Tulloch said. "This opportunity not only allows us to expand our reach but also helps us continue our mission of making a positive impact in the area I've called home for so many years. I believe that together, we can grow the brand and further support local initiatives that uplift our community."

The brand includes a Fifty-Five Signature Blend (named after Tulloch's jersey number) and a limited-edition Motor City Espresso Blend.

Fans can meet Tulloch and enjoy free samples off the coffee during two launch events on Saturday, Dec. 13.

From 11-11:30 a.m. Tulloch will be at the Kroger at 14945 23 Mile Rd., Shelby Township, followed by a visit from noon-1:30 p.m. at the 2200 E. 12 Mile Rd., Royal Oak location.

In addition to those stores, Circle House Coffee blends are available for purchase from Detroit-area Korgers in Ann Arbor, Commerce Twp., Milford, Rochester Hills, St. Clair Shores, Sterling Heights, Southgate, Plymouth, and White Lake.

A portion of proceeds from the coffee brand will support local charities, the company says.

—Lee DeVito

Bode's Corned Beef House to close after 60+ years

After some 66 years in business, Bode's Corned Beef House in downtown Plymouth is closing for good.

In a social media post published over the weekend, the business says it plans to close its doors on Friday, Dec. 19.

"This is not something we would have chosen or were expecting, but the owners of the building have sold it to a new company," they say.

The message adds, "We are heartbroken to be unable to serve the Plymouth community for longer, but are so greatful for the 6 decades of watching families gather and children grow up."

The owners say they hope to reopen in another location "if the fates allow."

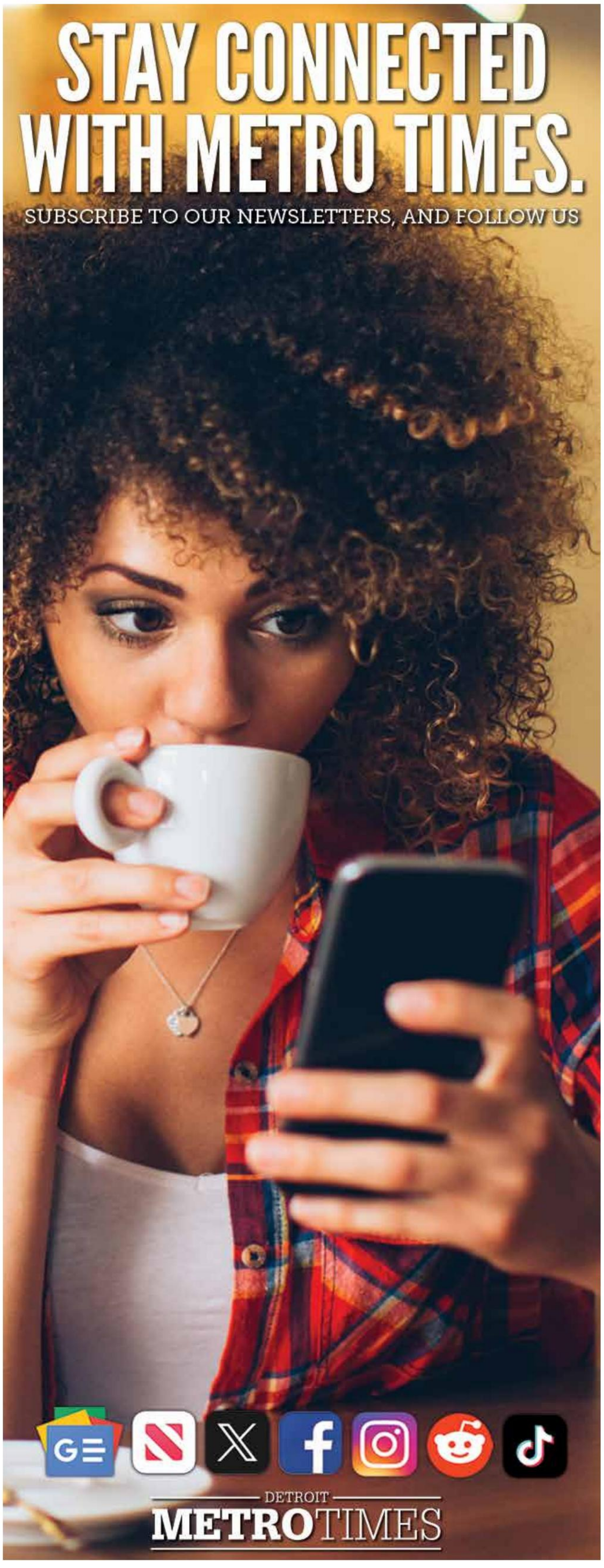
In the meantime, the restaurant plans to raise funds for its laid-off staff from 4-8 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 15. Cover is $20 per person.

"We encourage you to visit us in these last weeks and have one last corned beef meal as an homage to Bodes," the message reads.

"Once again, thank you for contributing to the memories we've made at Bodes Corned Beef House," it continues. "It has been an honor serving you."

According to its sign, Bode's Corned Beef House opened in 1959.

—Lee DeVito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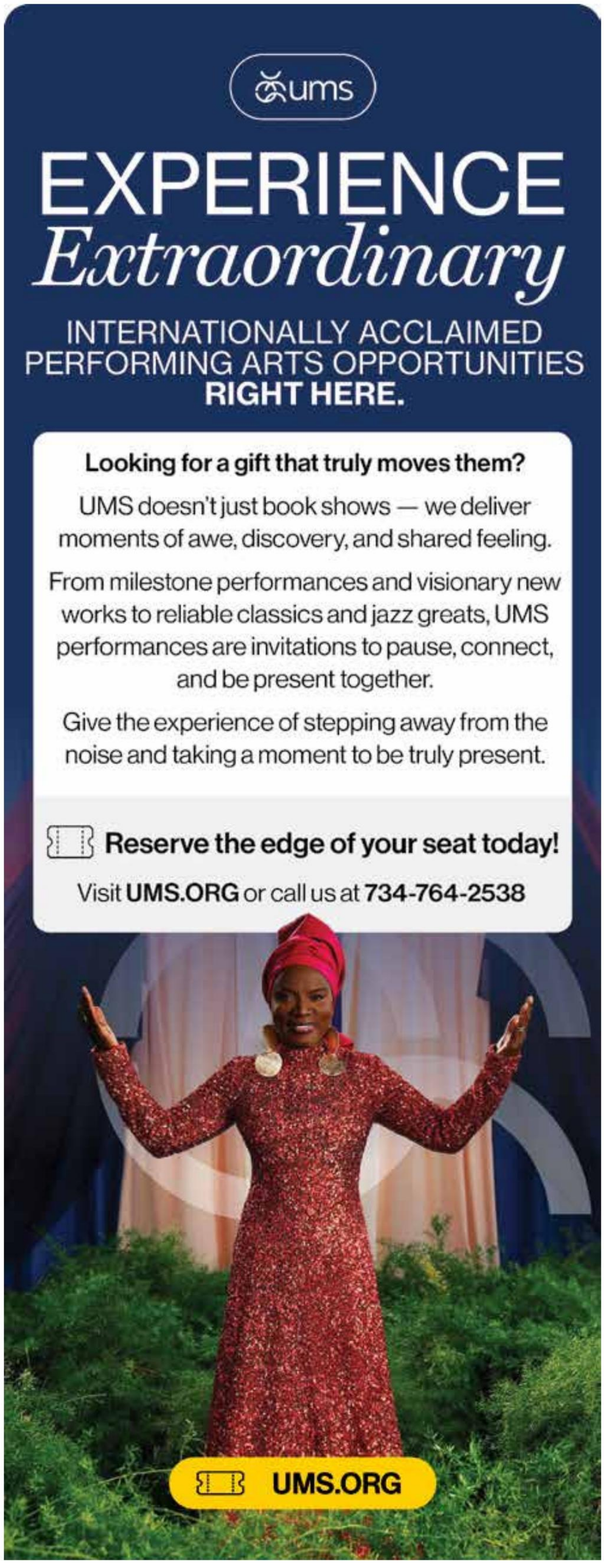
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Jennifer Lawrence in Die My Love. MUBI

Film

A motherhood double-feature and cinema as empathy

By Jared Rasic, Last Word Feature

If I Had Legs I'd Kick You
Rated: R
Run-time: 114 minutes

Die My Love
Rated: R
Run-time: 119 minutes

It's rare that two movies are both released around the same time and have profoundly interesting things to say about similar subjects. Yes, we got lucky in 1997 when *Volcano*and *Dante's Peak* arrived in the same calendar year, or even better, in 1998 when Hollywood bestowed upon us the end-of-the-world shenanigans of *Deep Impact* and *Armageddon*. If there's anything a studio head loves, it's an idea that someone else already spent money on.

Both *Die My Love* and *If I Had Legs I'd Kick You* are fundamentally two hilariously tragic and brutally funny movies about motherhood, but instead of playing like twin films, they play like two visionary filmmakers were separately inspired to tell stories about complicated and desperate women pushed to the very end of what they can handle and then pulled past the point of no return.

In *If I Had Legs I'd Kick You*, Rose Byrne plays Linda, a therapist who has reached her breaking point. Her preteen daughter has an eating disorder and must be fed through a tube every night. Her husband travels for months at a time for work, her own therapist doesn't seem to like her very much, and the ceiling in her apartment floods, leaving a giant black void that forces Linda to examine the gaping black maw of nothingness she finds at the center of her own life. Linda and her daughter move into a seedy motel while the ceiling is being fixed and end up trapped inside a spiraling dark night of the soul.

Make no mistake, *Legs* is a difficult watch, which takes the perpetual anxiety of *Beau is Afraid*, combines it with the relentless intensity of *Uncut Gems*, and peppers it with a generous smattering of Lynchian dream logic and nightmarish insanity. It's not a "fun" movie to watch, but it is rewarding. First of all, if there's a better performance this year than Rose Byrne, I will be in awe. This is prodigious work, made all the more astonishing by how unlikable Linda is as a human being, yet still harrowingly relatable and empathetic.

Director Mary Bronstein (whose husband and collaborator, Ronald, actually co-wrote *Uncut Gems*) hasn't just crafted an impeccably well-written and acted film, but as a visual artist, she has immediately stepped into the rarified air of auteur. The tone, editing, cinematography, music, performances, and overall freaking vibe meld so flawlessly together as to make *Legs* one of those movies that immediately feels like it has always existed and we're just now catching up to its singular wavelength.

Die My Love follows Jennifer Lawrence as Grace, a fiercely independent woman who moves out to the country with her boyfriend, Jackson, played by the increasingly impressive Robert Pattinson. Almost immediately, she becomes an unhappily bored and unsatisfied pregnant housewife. With the birth of their child, Grace begins to suffer from postpartum depression and a buried violence that progressively unlocks itself from her deepest corners.

People were pretty hard on Lawrence for a few years and I hope that's over now because, to be honest, she's been one of the finest actors of her generation since she exploded onto our screens with the masterpiece *Winter's Bone*. Her work in *Die My Love*isn't just her best since 2017's *Mother!*, but quite possibly one of the most vulnerable and fearlessly naked performances that a movie star of her caliber has ever given. Her Grace switches from swooning and romantic one second to blisteringly feral the next, just with a shift in her eyes, and it's truly mercurial work.

Scottish director Lynne Ramsey is probably on my Mount Rushmore of directors, as she directed not only one of my favorite films ever made with *Morvern Callar*, but also matches Lawrence in her fearlessness as an artist. Ramsay has only made five features across 26 years, and each one is more technically flawless, formally daring, and subversively experimental than the last. With *Die My Love*, she crafts a film of such achingly gorgeous frames and hauntingly lonely interior lives that it wounds the viewer with its sharp edges and jagged splinters.

Die My Love and *If I Had Legs I Would Kick You* aren't just about motherhood, they're about the price women pay to exist in the world every day — the judgements, the expectations, the perfection that society insists upon and then the cruelty it inflicts when they are just human. Both films are guttural screams of rage at a world that isn't just unfair, but has been playing from a stacked deck all along.

While neither film would necessarily be described as a crowd pleaser, the rewards one gets afterward compensates for the discomfort of the viewing experience because both works put us directly, unflinchingly, behind the eyes of women going through crisis. This is cinema as empathy in ways we so rarely get from film. I hope all filmgoers who watch these two miraculous films discover more grace for their mothers, their wives, their partners, and their sisters. Or, at least, for themselves. MT

If I Had Legs I'd Kick You
Grade: A

Die My Love
Grade: A-

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The Straight Dope

Cannabis gift ideas every Michigan stoner will appreciate

By Steve Neavling

Half-ounce jars of quality flower make a great gift for the cannabis lover in your life. STEVE NEAVLING

The holidaze are approaching, and that means it's time to figure out what to get everyone on your list — including the stoner in your life.

With Michigan's cannabis market teeming with choices at record-low prices, weed gifts are easy, fun, and far more thoughtful than a pair of socks or a generic scented candle.

The best part is, you don't need to overthink it or even know that much about cannabis to find a great gift. Whether the stoner in your life loves big, frosty buds or prefers something more discreet or potent, there's a cannabis gift for every type of smoker. And unlike random knick-knacks or mass-produced seasonal décor, these are presents people truly enjoy and will remember.

It's your chance to be the cool Santa this year.

So what do you get a stoner? Dispensary shelves are filled with weed products, from THC-infused drinks and specialty prerolls to concentrates and self-care products.

Here are seven holidaze-friendly cannabis gifts that occasional smokers and connoisseurs alike would appreciate:

Half-ounce jars

Half-ounce jars of quality flower are having a moment. They're usually packed with big, frosty buds and are wrapped in colorful, creative designs. Priced between $75 and $110, they'll impress anyone who appreciates good weed. Among the best brands offering half-ounce jars are 517 Premier Cannabis, A1Za, Exotic Matter, Favrd, Fractal, Freshy Fine, Growing Pains, Hytek, Information Entropy, Michigrown, Peninsula Gardens, Tip Top Crop, and Voyage Bloom.

THC beverages

Marijuana has come a long way, and nothing shows that more than cannabis-infused beverages. The flavors range from root beer and strawberry apple to lemon tea and mango pineapple. They hit faster than traditional edibles, and they're a fun and tastier alternative to alcohol. Some of the most popular choices are Highly Casual, Pleasantea, Armada Cannabis Co., and Mary Jones.

Rove recently debuted its holiday-themed Choco Mints. STEVE NEAVLING

Pre-rolls

If you're looking for a stocking stuffer or a small gift, pre-rolls won't disappoint. Michigan's market has no shortage of options, from one-gram joints to 2-gram infused prerolls. They start for as low as a couple of bucks, with higher quality one-gram prerolls ranging from $6 to $20, and handrolled, rosin-infused joints selling for $68. For higher-end prerolls, check out Wojo, Ice Kream Hash Co., 710 Labs, Freshy Fine, and LightSky Farms.

Live rosin

No cannabis product captures THC as purely as live rosin, a solventless concentrate known for its potency and flavor. It is one of the fastest-growing products on the recreational market. Live rosin typically comes in one-gram jars or half-gram vapes. Box up a handful of them, and you'll have a gift that will satisfy any rosin head. Some of the best rosin-makers are Hytek, 710 Labs, Eastside Alchemy, Exotic Matter, Growing Pains, Ice Kream Hash Co., and Wojo.

Vaporizers

Whether you're ingesting flower or concentrates, vaporizers are a flavorful and smooth way to consume cannabis. E-rigs offer an effective way to vape live resin and rosin, and they generally range in price from $100 to $400. Puffco, Dr. Dabber, and Utilian are popular options. For a dry-herb vape, check out DaVinci IQ3, PAX, TinyMight 2, Arizer Solo 3, and my favorite, the Zeus Arc GT4.

Self-care

Cannabis isn't just about getting high. THC, CBD, and CBN have medicinal benefits such as pain relief, reduced inflammation, and improved sleep. The cannabinoids are also used in soothing balms, lotions, patches, and bath soaks. The recreational market is loaded with self-care gifts, from tinctures and low-dose edibles to lip balms and facial serums. They're a thoughtful gift for people looking for alternatives to prescription meds or anyone who just wants to pamper themselves a little. Look no further than the Hive in Hazel Park or Nature's Remedy in Ferndale, a pair of dispensaries known for medicinal products.

Holiday-themed vaporizers

California-based Rove, which is widely available statewide, specializes in potent concentrates using melted THCA diamonds, which are pure crystalline forms of THC known for intense effects. The company recently debuted Choco Mints, a holiday-inspired blend of rich chocolate and cool peppermint with an uplifting, balanced high. The vapes are so discreet you can take them anywhere, even to midnight mass or your grandma's house.

At the end of the day, weed gifts are always more fun than the usual holiday junk. No one remembers you giving them a ceramic snowman or novelty mug, but they don't forget when you show up with some high-quality cannabis. Michigan's market makes it easy to find a thoughtful gift without spending a fortune or guessing someone's taste.

So whether your holiday plans involve stressful family dinners or a gift swap with friends, these presents got you covered. Wrap them up, pass them along, and become the person everyone thanks later.

And from those of us at *Metro Times*, happy holidaze! MT

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Savage Love

Quickies

By Dan Savage

Q: *Is Donald Trump a closeted gay man? I can't think of anything that screams "secretly gay" louder than building a golden ballroom.*

A: Donald Trump has been married to three different women (two of whom were immigrants), he's been accused of sexual harassment and assault by dozens of women, and he was found liable — by a jury of his peers — for sexually abusing E. Jean Carroll. I don't care if his ballroom has gilded slings, gilded lube dispensers, and gilded bottoms, that man is not one of mine.

Q: *You've talked about how urine is sterile but also switched to calling it "mostly" sterile. Is it safe to use in a neti pot?*

A: Sterile is binary — something either is or isn't sterile (sterile is not a spectrum!) — so it wouldn't be accurate to describe urine as "mostly sterile." My bad. That said, urine does have fewer bacteria than a lot of other things we ingest, from a Costco hot dog to the ass of a hot stranger. But seeing as it isn't safe to use tap water in a neti pot — at least not in Florida — it's probably not a great idea to use urine in one.

Q: *Do any women actually love anal sex?*

A: Some do, most don't. Adjust your expectations accordingly.

Q: *New partner wants to explore Shabari. I'm down, but it feels like a huge undertaking in terms of learning. There are a ton of resources out there, but I have no idea what sites are good. Any recommendations?*

A: "Learning from other experienced ropers in person is invaluable, and some kind of formal rope instruction is available in most big cities," said RopeSweatAndTears, an incredibly talented gay Latine roper based in Seattle. If you don't live in a city where you can find an in-person class, RSAT recommends the book *Tie Me Up: The Complete Guide to Bondage* by Stephen Niederwieser and online bondage tutorials from The Duchy and Shibari Study. "Like with any new skill, rope bondage takes practice, persistence, and patience," said RSAT. "Start with basic and simple ties and gradually increase complexity as your skill grows."

RopeSweatAndTears is the co-founder of RopeLab Seattle. Follow him on Instagram @Rope.Sweat.And.Tears.

Q: *Is it true that all non-asexual shy women are subs sexually? I like the idea of dating a cute shy woman, but for reasons of my own, I wouldn't want to be a Dom. Also: Am I the only non-asexual person in the world who is not interested in domination and submission?*

A: It's not true that all "non-asexual" women — shy or otherwise — are subs. And I don't know how you got the impression that you're the only "non-asexual person" in the world who prefers vanilla sex, but you can rest assured: your majoritarian sexual preferences are shared by the majority.

Q: *I have severe ED. It doesn't move. Messy divorce ten years ago. Haven't gotten hard since. I'm broke. Tried Viagra. Tried Cialis. Nothing. Please help.*

A: If you can pinpoint an inciting incident — you haven't gotten hard since your divorce — it's therapy you need, not meds. Still, you might want to ask your doctor about TriMix.

Q: *I've read awful stories about people recently dressing up as Nazis. The prankster in me wants to throw drag balls and parody the shit out of Nazi outfits. What do you think? I confess, I'm a het woman so I don't know how the LGBTQ community would react.*

A: While I never claim to speak for the LGBT community, in this case I'm going to make an exception: The entire community would react with anger if a straight lady — even a well-intentioned straight lady — started throwing Nazi-themed drag balls.

Q: *Do gay dads do it better? Or best?*

A: Gay dads — good gay dads — do their best, same as good straight dads, bi dads, pan dads, ace dads, omni dads, etc., etc., etc.

Q: *Can you please coin a phrase or term as a dog whistle that would make it possible for kinky people to identify other kinky people in vanilla spaces?*

A: Sexual minorities had dog whistles — secret handshakes, code words, telltale accessories (colored hankies, green carnations, rings of keys), even entire languages — back in the day. But if modern kinksters were to come up with a code word, phrase, accessory, etc., today, some asshole would jump on social media to do an "explainer" tomorrow, the *New York Times* would have a trend piece out the day after tomorrow, and the day after that non-kinksters would be using the phrase ironically.

P.S. Day collars, to take one example, were not a secret that kept.

P.P.S. There's no such thing as a vanilla space. There are only spaces — there are only certain rooms full of people — where the vanilla and kinky alike adhere to site-specific social norms that discourage sexual displays and/or the telegraphing of sexual interests. Everyone is assumed to be vanilla, which works out fine for vanilla people, as the default assumption is accurate. And while some kinky people complain about being erased by the "vanilla assumption," there is something to be said for hidden depths. Kinky secrets are the best secrets.

Q: *Any cock ring brands for big dicks? Something for a six-inch circumference? I'm at my wit's end here.*

A: There are adjustable cock rings out there — but if you want something solid, why not commission something from a metalworker? Anyone who makes custom piercing jewelry (or custom cock cages) would be happy to make a custom cock ring. It'll be pricey, of course, but time is money, and it sounds like you've wasted a lot of time already on your search for a cock ring that fits.

Q: *What's the best way to not be creepy when asking for sex?*

A: Depends on who you're asking. If you're asking someone you're already fucking — if you're asking an established/regular/cohabitating sex partner — there's nothing creepy about asking directly. If you're asking someone you aren't already fucking, an accurate reading of the room and/or vibe (which will require you to control for dickful thinking) can keep the ask from coming across as creepy. If you're asking someone you shouldn't be fucking under any circumstances — your therapist or your mom or your parole officer — the ask will never not be creepy.

Q: *What are your ideas for hosting a play party for the first time?*

A: Everything I know about hosting play parties I learned from *The Sex Party Handbook: Your Ultimate Guide to the World of Orgies, Sex Clubs and More (and How to Host Your Own)* by Ali Bushell.

P.S. Ali Bushell shared his tips for hosting sex parties on Episode 890 of the Savage Lovecast.

Q: *Can you give head after having a tooth removed? I have to get a right lower molar removed and I'm supposed to let that spot "stay empty" for three months until I can get a goddam expensive tooth implant! How long do I have to wait after the tooth is removed before performing fellatio? Can't ask my actual dentist this, so turning to you.*

A: I took your question straight to the top: Dr. Darren Cox is a professor in the department of oral and maxillofacial surgery at the University of the Pacific School of Dentistry. Dr. Cox is also the president-elect of the American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology.

"This question has to be answered on the basis of wound healing and preserving a clot in the socket the extracted tooth occupied," said Dr. Cox. "Any aggressive motion should be avoided after the extraction, so as not to dislodge the clot. No spitting, smoking or sucking through a straw. No gargling or swishing. Dry socket — which is when the clot dislodges and exposes the bone — is really painful. Light licking or passing into the mouth should not dislodge the clot after a week. Gentle 'sucking,' without really SUCKING, should be ok. Or they can just wait!"

Q: *Can you trust someone not to cheat when they've cheated 100+ times in the past.*

A: The question here isn't whether you can — of course you can — but whether you should.

Q: *I love gay erotica, but I want to find erotic porn. Even porn that has the stupidest "storyline," like the first porn video I bought at Tower Records: "Don't Kiss Me! I'm Straight!," a classic I got on VHS. Porn "content" that starts with two guys naked and immediately going at it is boring. Will I be stuck re-watching porn from the late 80s?*

A: The porn you're searching for — modern gay porn with plot, stakes, character arcs, great dicks and great performances — can be found at Himeros TV.

Q: *Why don't I have a male G-spot in my ass? Bottoming is fine for me but there are no magical feelings.*

A: Prostate glands are like tits — some are wired, some are not. It looks like yours is not.

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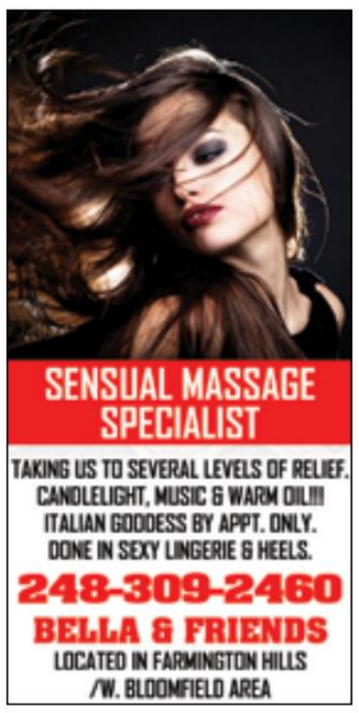
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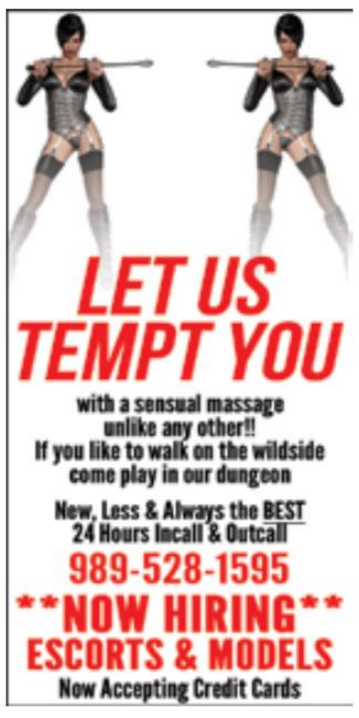
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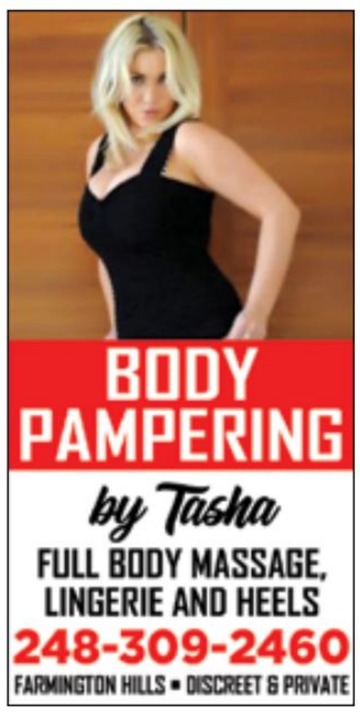

Q: *You've often said there is no perfect "one" for any of us, just a .75 that we have to round up to "one." My wife and I were high school sweethearts. After 20 years, she was my .80. After 30 years, she was .85. After 40 years, she was my .90. And when she passed after 47 years together, she was my perfect 1 and she will remain so until we meet again. I'm sure there are others who have been as lucky.*

A: I'm sorry for your loss and inspired by your math. Not everyone has your luck, but everyone deserves it.

Q: *Why do I have this one ex that — no matter how much time passes — still calls me after a breakup? We keep hooking up (they have a lot of failed relationships), but they have no interest in getting back together. It's confusing.*

A: You have this one ex that still calls you after a breakup because you have this one ex you fuck whenever they call. Stop fucking this one ex and — I promise you — this one ex will stop calling.

Q: *I'm a cis lady who wants to learn more about throatgasms from deep-throating. I heard an interview with a sex expert about it, but haven't had much luck finding more info about having an orgasm in your throat from giving head. Can you enlighten me?*

A: I can't enlighten you about throatgasms because throatgasms are not a thing. If they were, I would've had one by now.

Q: *Cis gay guy in my 40s. I like to bottom but also like receiving oral and I love pounding face. But I don't like topping butts. I got called out by a Grindr hookup for labeling myself "vers." He was pissed that I wouldn't top him and called me a closeted bottom. Who's the asshole here?*

A: If he blew up at you — if he flew off the handle — then he was the asshole. If you reacted defensively and/or pedantically when he pointed out that your use of "vers" was misleading (men use top/bottom on Grindr exclusively in reference to anal sex), then you were the asshole. But if he didn't blow up and you weren't defensive *and* you admitted you were in the wrong, then no one was the asshole.

Q: *I know for males, there's "blow job." Is there a slang noun form for a female's getting off by having her clit sucked/tickled to orgasm? I'm trying to complete the sentence: "My boyfriend gave me the most amazing _____ last night." Thanks!*

A: The universal/unisexual term for oral sex — giving and receiving — is "head." Makes sense: Look down as someone who's sucking your clit and/or your dick and what do you see? The back of their head. That's why we — men and women alike — talk about "getting head," "giving head," "good head," "bad head," etc.

Q: *Vagina-having person here: Is it cheating if a penis-having person living in another state sends me a customized sex toy modeled after their own anatomy?*

A: Does this penis-having person have a something-or-other-having partner? If they do and you don't know whether their partner would regard this as cheating, that's a good sign this penis-having person hasn't asked their partner. And the most likely reason they haven't asked their partner is because they already know their partner's answer — and the answer isn't "no, it's not."

Q: *Why isn't there humor in masturbation videos? Why isn't there humor in porn in general? People are way too serious when they're masturbating or having sex! Sheesh, lighten up and have some laughs!*

A: "This sounds like a case of looking in the wrong places for 'funny' porn," said Colby Jaxxx, the biggest star in gay gooning porn. "If he's seeking male masturbation videos, he definitely needs to look into gooning porn. Us gooners are pretty unserious in front of the camera. But if he's not looking for male JO videos, independent creators have space to be funny and generally add more of their personality to their videos."

Follow ColbyJaxxx on Instagram @colbyjaxxofficial and on Twitter @ColbyJaxxx.

P.S. If you want humor and porn, check out the HUMP! Film Festival. You can stream our most recent collection of HUMP! films — including an absolutely hilarious movie musical about a sentient (and very demanding) cum sock — and collections from other years at humpfilmfest.com/streaming-library.

Q: *How do I convince people to actually NOT buy me gifts for Christmas?!? I just want time with them!*

A: Let people enjoy things — and some people really enjoy getting other people gifts, even (or especially) people who've asked them not to get them gifts. MT

Got problems? Yes, you do! Email your question for the column to mailbox@savage.love!

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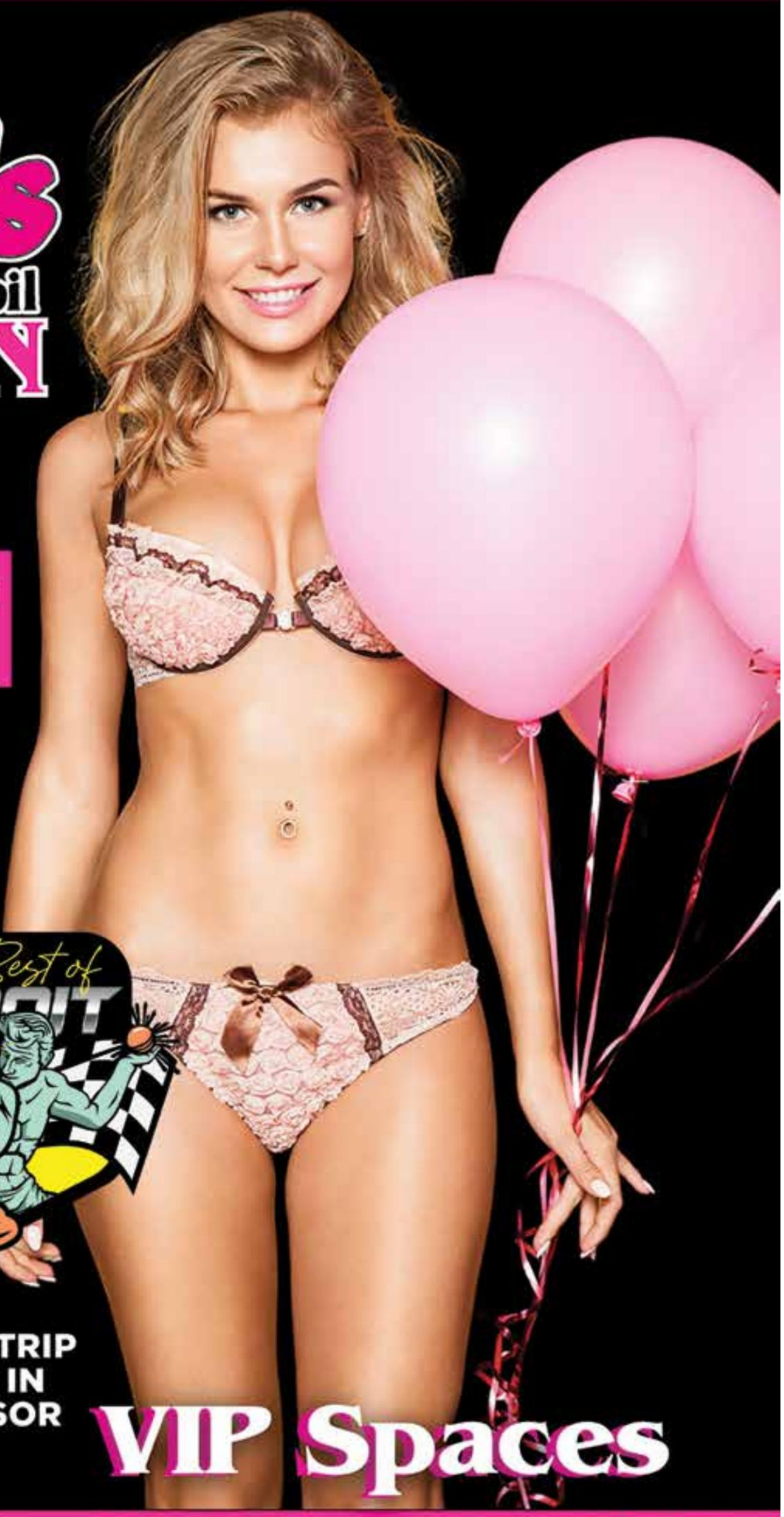

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CULTURE

Free Will Astrology

By Rob Brezsny

ARIES: March 21 – April 19
Home is a building you live in. It's also a metaphor for the inner world you carry within you. Is it an expansive and luminous place filled with windows that look out onto vast vistas? Or is it cramped, dark, and in disrepair, a psychic space where it's hard to feel comfortable? Does it have a floor plan you love and made yourself? Or was it designed according to other people's expectations? It may be neither of those extremes, of course. My hope is that this horoscope will prod you to renovate aspects of your soul's architecture. The coming months will be an excellent time for this sacred work.

TAURUS: April 20 – May 20
During the construction of the Brooklyn Bridge in 1872, workers made an uncanny discovery: They could detect approaching storms by observing vibrations in the bridge's cables. The massive metal structure was an inadvertent meteorological instrument. I'm predicting that your intuition will operate with comparable sensitivity in the coming months, Taurus. You will have a striking capacity to notice subtle signals in your environment. What others regard as background noise will reveal rich clues to you. Hot tip: Be extra alert for nuanced professional opportunities and social realignments. Like the bridge workers, you will be attuned to early signs of changing conditions.

GEMINI: May 21 – June 20
Sloths are so energy-efficient they can survive on 160 calories per day: the equivalent of an apple. They've mastered the art of thriving on minimal intake by moving deliberately and digesting thoroughly. Life is inviting you to learn from sloths, Gemini. The coming weeks will be a good time to take an inventory of your energy strategies. Are you burning fuel frantically, or are you extracting maximum nourishment from what you already possess? However you answer that question, I urge you to experiment with being more efficient—but without depriving yourself. Try measuring your productivity not by speed and flash but by the diligence of your extraction. Dig deep and be thorough. Your nervous system and bank account will thank you.

CANCER: June 21 – July 22
The Danish concept of *arbejdsglæde* refers to the happiness and satisfaction derived from work. It's the joy found in labor itself, not just in its financial rewards and prestige. It's about exulting in the self-transformations you generate as you do your job. Now is an excellent time to claim this joy more than ever, Cancerian. Meditate with relish on all the character-building and soul-growth opportunities your work offers you and will continue to provide.

LEO: July 23 – August 22
In the deep Pacific Ocean, fields of giant tube worms thrive in total darkness around hydrothermal vents, converting toxic chemicals into life-sustaining energy. These weirdly resilient creatures challenge our assumptions about which environments can support growth. I suspect your innovative approach to gathering resources in the coming months will display their adaptability. Situations that others find inhospitable or unmanageable will be intriguing opportunities for you. For best results, you should ruminate on how limitations could actually protect and nurture your development. You may discover that conventional sustenance isn't your only option.

VIRGO: August 23 – Sept. 22
For a long time, scientists didn't understand why humans have an organ called the appendix. Most thought it was useless. But it turns out that the appendix is more active than anyone knew. Among other functions, it's a safe haven for beneficial gut bacteria. If a health crisis disrupts our microbiome, this unsung hero repopulates our intestines with the helpful microbes we need. What was once considered irrelevant is actually a backup drive. With that in mind as a metaphor, here's my question, Virgo: How many other parts of your world may be playing long games and performing unnoticed services that you haven't understood yet? Investigate that possibility!

LIBRA: Sept. 23 – Oct. 22
In the coming months, you'll be asked to wield your Libran specialties more than ever. Your allies and inner circle will need you to provide wise counsel and lucid analysis. For everyone's sake, I hope you balance compassion with clarity and generosity with discernment. Certain collaborations will need corrective measures but shouldn't be abandoned. Your gift will lie in finding equilibrium that honors everyone's dignity. When in doubt, ask: "What would restore harmony rather than merely appear polite?" True diplomacy is soulful, not superficial. Bonus: The equilibrium you achieve could resonate far beyond your immediate circle.

SCORPIO: Oct. 23 – Nov. 21:
The Hubble Space Telescope is a school bus-sized space observatory orbiting 320 miles above the Earth. There, it observes the universe free from atmospheric distortion. Its instruments and detectors need to be recalibrated continuously. Daily monitors, weekly checks, and yearly updates keep the telescope's tech sharp as it ages. I believe it's a good time for you Scorpios to do your own recalibrations. Subtle misalignments between your intentions and actions can now be corrected. Your basic vision and plans are sound; the adjustments required are minor. For best results, have maximum fun as you fine-tune your fundamentals.

SAGITTARIUS: Nov. 22 – Dec. 21
Leonardo da Vinci painted his iconic *Mona Lisa* on a thin panel of poplar wood, which naturally expands and contracts with changes in humidity. Over the centuries, this movement has caused a crack and measurable warping. One side of the classic opus is bending a bit more than the other. Let's use this as a metaphor for you, Sagittarius. I suspect that a fine quality you are known for and proud of is changing shape. This should be liberating, not worrisome. If even the Mona Lisa can't remain static, why should you? I say: Let your masterwork age. Just manage the process with grace and generosity. The central beauty may be changing, but it's still beautiful.

CAPRICORN: Dec. 22 – Jan. 19
"Apoptosis" is a word referring to programmed cell death. It's a process by which your aging, damaged, or obsolete cells deliberately destroy themselves for the benefit of your organism as a whole. This "cellular suicide" is carefully regulated and crucial for development, maintenance, and protection against diseases. About 50-70 billion cells die in you every day, sacrificing themselves so you can live better. Let's use this healthy process as a psychospiritual metaphor. What aspects of your behavior and belief system need to die off right now so as to promote your total well-being?

AQUARIUS: Jan. 20 – Feb. 18
Which parts of your foundations are built to strengthen with age? Which are showing cracks? The coming months will be an excellent time to reinforce basic structures so they will serve you well into the future. Don't just patch problems. Rebuild and renovate using the very best ingredients. Your enduring legacy will depend on this work, so choose materials that strengthen as they mature rather than crumble. Nothing's permanent in life, but some things are sturdier and more lasting than others.

PISCES: Feb.19 – March 20
Along the Danube River in Europe, migrating storks return each spring to rebuild massive nests atop church steeples, roofs, and trees. New generations often reuse previous bases, adding additional twigs, grass, roots, and even human-made stuff like cloth and plastics. Some of these structures have lasted for centuries and weigh half a ton. Let's make this a prime metaphor for you in the coming months, Pisces. I see your role as an innovator who improves and enhances good traditions. You will bring your personal genius to established beauty and value. You will blend your futuristic vision with ancestral steadiness, bridging tomorrow with yesterday. MT

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